

HOUSING

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PRESIDENT HOOVER TAKES A HAND IN THE HOUSING SITUATION

On August 1st, President Hoover announced the calling of a White House Conference on Home Building and Home Ownership.

The Conference is to study on a nation-wide scale the problems of home ownership and home building with a view to the development of a better understanding of them. Secretary of Commerce, Robert P. Lamont, and Secretary of Interior, Ray L. Wilbur, have been named Joint Chairmen of a preliminary Planning Committee, which is to establish nation-wide sub-committees to determine the facts and study the different phases of the question, and make all arrangements for the ultimate Conference to be held about a year from now.

At the same time that he made this announcement, the President gave out a list of names of various national organizations, representatives of which had been asked to serve as members of the Planning Committee.

These comprise a wide range of public interest in this important question in all its aspects. The membership of the Planning Committee is as follows:

Harland Bartholomew, President, National Conference on City Planning, St. Louis, Mo.; Alexander Bing, President, City Housing Corporation, Radburn, N. J.; Mrs. Hugh B. Bradford, President, National Congress of Parents and Teachers, Sacramento, Calif.; William M. Calder, Builder, Brooklyn, N. Y. (former U. S. Senator from New York); Frederic A. Delano, President, American Civic Association, Washington, D. C.; Frederick H. Ecker, Association of Life Insurance Presidents, New York, N. Y.; Frederick M. Feiker, Managing Director, Associated Business Papers, Inc., New York, N. Y.; James Ford, Executive Director, Better Homes in America, Washington, D. C.; Mrs. Henry Ford, President, Women's National Farm and Garden Association, Dearborn, Mich.; W. H. George, President, National Association of Builders' Exchanges, 2 Market St., San Francisco, Calif.; Mrs. Lillian M. Gilbreth, Consulting Engineer, Montclair, N. J.; William Green, President, American Federation of Labor, Washington, D. C.; A. E. Horst, President, Associated General Contractors of America, Philadelphia, Pa.; Mrs. W. F. Lake, President, Federated Women's Clubs of Arkansas, Hot Springs, Ark.; Miss Gertrude B. Lane, Editor, Woman's Home Companion, New York, N. Y.; Mrs. William B. Meloney, New York Herald-Tribune, New York, N. Y.; R. Holtby Myers, President, U. S. League of Building and Loan Associations, Los Angeles, Calif.; John W. O'Leary, Former President, Chamber of Commerce of the United

States, Chicago, Ill.; William Stanley Parker, American Institute of Architects, Boston, Mass.; Leonard P. Reaume, President, National Association of Real Estate Boards, Detroit, Mich.; Edgar Rickard, Director General, American Relief Administration, New York, N. Y.; A. C. Robinson, Vice President, Savings Bank Division, American Bankers Association, Pittsburgh, Pa.; Loring A. Schuler, Editor, Ladies Home Journal, Independence Square, Philadelphia, Pa.; Mrs. John F. Sippel, President, General Federation of Women's Clubs, Baltimore, Md.; Dr. Louise Stanley, Chief, Bureau of Home Economics, U. S. Dept. of Agriculture, Washington, D. C.; French Strother, Administrative Assistant to the President, Washington, D. C.; Miss Frances L. Swain, President, American Home Economics Association, Chicago, Ill.; Thomas B. Symons, The National Grange, Director of Extension, College Park, Md.; Sam H. Thompson, President, Farm Bureau Federation, Chicago, Ill.; Lawrence Veiller, Director, National Housing Association, New York, N. Y.; John M. Gries, Exec. Sec'y, President's Conference on Home Building and Home Ownership, Washington, D. C.; James S. Taylor, Head, Division of Building and Housing, Bureau of Standards, Washington, D. C.

John M. Gries—who for several years has been Chief of the Division of Building and Housing in the Department of Commerce—has been appointed Executive Secretary, with offices in the Department of Commerce. It was announced that the date of the Conference will be determined by the Planning Committee and that funds had been provided privately to cover the entire research and other activities of the Conference.

Some 6 weeks later the President invited these representatives of national groups to meet with him at the White House to consider the work of the Conference and to constitute themselves the Planning Committee that he had in mind.

On September 24th, 28 members of this Planning Committee met with President Hoover in the Cabinet Room and learned from the President the purposes he had in view in calling this Conference into being.

On this occasion the President said:

THE PRESIDENT'S VIEWS

I appreciate very much the high sense of public service which has brought you here today. I would not have asked you to come if I had not felt deeply that there was a real need. For some years the business community, our municipalities, and great numbers of associations devoted to the promotion of public welfare, have interested themselves in the problems of more adequate housing and home ownership. I will say at once that we have a larger proportion of adequate housing than any country in the world, but we still lag far behind our national ideals of homes for all our people. Substantial advances have been made in some parts of the country; great experience has been gained and it has been the wish of many of these groups that there should be a thorough national inquiry with view to a summation of this experience, the mobilization of existing movements and the possible development from it of a new state of thought and action.

Adequate housing goes to the very roots of the well being of the family, and the family is the social unit of the nation. It is more

than comfort that is involved, it has the important aspects of health and morals and education and the provision of a fair chance for growing childhood. Nothing contributes more for greater happiness or for sounder social stability than the surroundings of their homes. It should be possible in our country for anybody of sound character and industrious habits to provide himself with adequate housing and preferably to buy his own home.

The finance of home building, especially for second mortgages, is the most backward segment of our whole credit system. It is easier to borrow 85% on an automobile and repay it on the installment plan than to buy a home on that basis—and generally the house requires a higher interest rate. The whole process of purchase and finance involves a ceremony like a treaty between governments and yet the home is certainly as good collateral as an automobile; it depreciates more slowly, if at all, and its owner will make a harder fight to keep it. The home has tentacles of sentiment as well as bonds of practical necessity that bind the occupant to it. Part of the difficulty lies in inadequate financial organization and part of it you will find in obsolete laws.

There are other important phases of the problem beyond the financing of the individual home owner. The problem of creating real and systematic home areas adjacent to industry and to our cities which can be safeguarded from commercial invasion and destruction needs exhaustive consideration. Such areas have been created both here and abroad with great success. The helter-skelter building of homes adjacent to our cities produces many inadequacies and wastes. Such a question at once raises large problems of city and industrial planning as well as problems of finance. The automobile has made such communities far more practical than ever before.

I am in hopes you can find the time and organization to go even farther afield than individual home ownership into this whole question of housing. This will at once carry you into the apartment and rural fields as well.

Besides these questions there are problems of architecture, aesthetic questions and questions of interior convenience, as well as problems of construction—all of which have large importance, and enter into rural as well as urban homes.

I would suggest to you that there is also an important economic bearing of this whole matter beyond even the betterment of the family. With constant improvement of method and labor saving devices we constantly set free a stream of workers from established industry which must be absorbed in new or expanding industries if we would have for them employment and the articles or services which comprise advancing standards of living. There is no doubt we shall make new inventions and new needs but the greatest present field for the absorption of our surplus national energy lies in better housing. There are some emergency questions arising from the present depression to which you can I believe assist in solution.

I shall not enter upon the many phases of the subject. They are well known to many of you. My general thought has been that we should first have a determination of the facts in every important direction, followed by a weighing and distillation of these facts and the formulation of collective judgment of the leaders of our country in this special knowledge. Not only the wide scope of the subject, but its many intricate problems involved will all require time for investigation

and study. I have not presumed that you could undertake to direct such a task as this and bring it to conclusion within a few weeks or even months, or that you could undertake it without large assistance and cooperation. We wish to set up something more than an ephemeral discussion. It is obviously not our purpose to set up the Federal Government in the building of homes. There are many questions of local government involved. It is my hope that out of this inquiry and the Conferences that will follow it, we should make so well founded a contribution to our national understanding as to give direction and coordination to thought and action throughout the country.

Following this meeting Secretary Lamont, as Chairman of the White House Conference, outlined in a broad way the problems that confronted the Planning Committee and the method that it was likely to adopt in preparing the way for the Conference to be held a year from now. On this occasion in an interview with the press, Secretary Lamont said:

SECRETARY LAMONT'S IDEAS

Although months of committee work will precede the main Conference on Home Building and Home Ownership, and although it will deal in large measure with the long view of things, we believe that as the work develops it will help in solving the immediate problems of the home building industry and of families that are trying to improve their homes. Through the press and through such organizations as Better Homes in America with its 7,000 local committees, important findings can be relayed quickly to the general public.

Estimates presented to the very recent meeting of the Planning Committee in the Commerce Department indicated that at least \$50,000,000,000 will be spent on new residential construction in this country during the next 20 years, and that in addition upwards of \$500,000,000 a year is being spent currently on household repairs and maintenance.

A compilation of the most recent vacancy surveys made throughout the country indicates that in many centers the number of desirable vacant houses and apartments is not excessive, and that with the present low rate of residential building activity a resumption of more active building will soon be required by the needs of our steadily growing population, and the razing of old structures.

Also it was brought out at the meeting that with recent drops in prices of important building materials, an ample number of highly skilled building trades workers available, contractors anxious to obtain work, and first mortgage money generally available at reasonable terms, conditions are now favorable for home builders who have the resources and intend to build, to go ahead. In general, conditions are also good for going ahead with repairs, alterations and improvements to existing houses.

The intense interest shown by all present at the meeting of the Planning Committee gives the best possible assurance of practical results from the work. Representatives of organizations embracing millions of families in their membership soon found grounds of common understanding with leading business, professional and civic groups. The scope of work of the Conference was interpreted broadly to extend over a wide range of problems connected with home making, family financing, and housekeeping—as well as the provision and financing of new homes. Home financing came up again and again as an outstanding problem that had a bearing on numerous other questions.

Home building was interpreted to include not only the construction of houses, but the layout of subdivisions and the relationships between home neighborhoods, the location of business and industrial centers, and the whole problem of industrial decentralization.

Ample opportunities were developed for cooperation of a wide variety of groups whose interests touch upon the home and which will be invited as the work goes on to take part in the work of the Conference. It appeared that many existing constructive movements should be greatly strengthened by gaining support from other groups during the course of the work. It was clearly brought out, for

example, that assured quality of new construction—so important to home buyers and home builders—is a goal that interests financing agencies who want the best possible securities behind their loans. Reputable builders want assured quality because they suffer when an unscrupulous or ignorant competitor puts improperly built houses on the market or bases a low bid on the expectation of doing inferior work. It appears that there is a fruitful field for joint efforts on the part of lenders, builders, architects, real estate men, material manufacturers and dealers, and several other groups in solving this problem.

Another point emphasized at the meeting was the progress that would be achieved if the best practices in every branch of the home building industry could be used generally. In the case of subdividing new residential neighborhoods, for example, it appears that obsolete customs are often followed, whether because of failure of the home buying public to realize the advantages of the best modern practice, lack of interest on the part of the subdivider, or the deterrent effect of obsolete laws or regulations that were not framed in the light of present-day conditions or knowledge.

The work of mapping out subjects for the different committees is going forward actively under the direction of and advice of the Planning Committee of the Conference, of which Dr. John M. Gries is Executive Secretary.

Altogether, the work of the Conference has had an auspicious start. We cannot expect it to accomplish miracles, but we do hope that every American family may be the better off because of it.

Since that time Dr. Gries, the executive officer of the association with his staff, has been busy formulating a comprehensive scheme of organization for the Conference, consulting with various individuals and groups, to the end that no important aspect of this vast question shall be overlooked.

A meeting of the Planning Committee was held in Washington a few days ago and a plan of organization adopted.

HOW THE REALTORS VIEW IT

What President Hoover's action will mean to the country, and how its significance is regarded by so important a group as the realtors of the United States, is well exemplified in a statement issued by the National Association of Real Estate Boards shortly after the first meeting in Washington. In a story sent to the press of the country, that organization had the following to say:

The government of the United States has put itself actively and powerfully behind the widening of home ownership. In a way which has never been done it is undertaking to bring practical assistance to make it possible for its citizens to own the physical structures that shelter their family life. It is setting up a machinery new to American life for this specific purpose. It is planning to draw from the various great business groups concerned with home buying whatever facts and ideas they can suggest that will open home ownership as widely as possible to its people.

This is the meaning of the meeting in Washington of the Planning Committee for the Conference on Home Building and Home Ownership which President Hoover has set up.

Simultaneously, the ablest business minds of the country—the financial leaders, the men who are conceiving new co-ordinations of business and bringing new economies into existence in production and consumption—are looking in a new way into the field of home production, and the conjunction of these two factors should mean much for the future of the family that wants to own its own home, and for the future of real estate activity, Leonard P. Reaume, President of the National Association of Real Estate Boards, states in reporting the work of the recent Washington meeting, which he attended as a member of the Planning Committee.

WHAT KIND OF HOME SHOULD A CHILD HAVE?

THE WHITE HOUSE CONFERENCE STANDARDS

The home is the matrix of the child after birth. This is true in both meanings of the word. For it is both a shelter and the mould that forms the child's future character.

It was to have been expected, therefore, that the great White House Conference on Child Health and Welfare called by President Hoover a year ago and which recently concluded its sessions at Washington should have had something to say of value to the country as to the Homes of its future citizens—to have pointed out what were the things to be sought in a home, if the children of this country were to have that environment from birth that would be best suited to develop the child's health and welfare.

The Conference in this respect did not disappoint expectations. Acting under authority of its Chairman, Dr. Ray L. Wilbur, Secretary of the Interior, Dr. Louise Stanley of the Department of Agriculture, as Chairman of the Section dealing with "The Family and Parent Education" appointed a Committee to work out and report upon those standards of housing that should be found in the homes of the nation.

Such a Committee—headed by Dr. James Ford, Executive Director of Better Homes in America, and containing in its personnel such housing experts as Bernard J. Newman, James S. Taylor and Lawrence Veiller with whom were associated Miss Grace Morin, Head of the Department of Household Arts at Cornell University, Miss Edith M. Thomas, Home Economist of the Federal Board for Vocational Education and Miss Gertrude Sawyer, architect of Washington—after much patient and laborious work developed a set of "Housing Standards" that should prove of great value to the country.

These "Standards" will shortly be published as part of a separate pamphlet for use by Home Economists and others, and will also no doubt be found in the 18 or 20 volumes of the Proceedings of the White House Conference to be published ultimately.

They have so much interest for our readers that we give them in full here.

HOUSING STANDARDS WITH PARTICULAR REFERENCE TO THE HEALTH, SAFETY AND WELFARE OF CHILDREN

Children are influenced favorably or unfavorably by the conditions which surround them. Chief among the enviroing conditions of the growing child are those of the home. The latter in turn comprise both the physical environment ordinarily spoken of as housing conditions and the personal factors of home and family life. To this Committee

has been assigned the problem of stating the types of housing conditions most favorable to the growth and development of the child.

Housing conditions include the design, planning and construction and maintenance of home, premises and neighborhood. Each of these unquestionably exerts a continuous influence upon children. An analysis of factors in housing conditions affecting the development of children will be found, incidentally, in the reports of Committee 1 on Growth and Development.

THE HEALTH OF THE CHILD IN THE HOME

It is of course clear that the health of the child is affected in many ways by conditions of the home. Sunshine and fresh air—which are so important to vigorous development and to happiness—can be secured in every room by proper planning. The merits of modern sanitary plumbing and clean abundant water supply are sufficiently obvious. The need for freedom from excessive dampness, and in the winter from excessive dryness of air, has been made sufficiently clear in medical literature. Somewhat less obvious is the importance of convenience and comfort. Yet the needless inconveniences and discomforts through improper planning of the house, or inadequate or poorly selected equipment, are a source of irritation and perhaps of needless ill health among parents and react most unfavorably upon the tone, quality and happiness of family life.

Undisturbed sleep is usually recognized as essential to development in childhood, but cannot be had unless—through regulation of housing and community conditions—residences can be located upon streets in which there is relatively little through traffic, and unless rooms are sufficient in number and so arranged that privacy can be secured. The health of children also requires relative cleanliness of premises, proper removal of household wastes, an abundant supply of clean water, protection from excessive heat and cold, protection from escaping coal gas and leaking gas fixtures, adequate provision for the refrigeration of food and the preparation of meals and for lighting arrangements which will not cause eye strain—in short, thoroughgoing provision for sanitation, safety and cleanliness.

SAFETY FOR THE CHILD IN THE HOME

The safety of the child is to be secured by protection from the recognized sources of danger, namely, from dangerous structural conditions, from fire, from falling and from needless bumps and bruises, which come from defective planning and equipment. It is recognized that absolute safety is impossible and that the child must be trained to keep away from stoves and fireplaces, and to avoid playing with lighting fixtures, and will need a good deal of supervision in earlier years to keep from hard knocks and needless falls. Nevertheless, the mother may be spared much anxiety and the child may be saved from possible injury through attention to these matters in the planning of the house. The above have been taken into consideration in the drawing up of the housing standards, especially in those provisions which deal with fireproofing and with heating and lighting equipment, as well as by special suggestions for gates at tops of stairs, low handrails on stairs, and the suggestions for the avoidance of traffic dangers through the placing of

residences on minor streets and for protected play of children in the supervised backyard.

THE WELFARE OF THE CHILD IN THE HOME

To some extent also the housing conditions may affect the mental, moral and spiritual growth of the child. A chief essential, privacy, can be secured by planning. Each child should have a room in which it can be by itself. There is no one essential in personality development more important than this, though it is obvious that the proper developmental use of such privacy is a matter of training and the inculcation of ideals and right habits. It is possible also in the planning of the house to arrange for a play space through the design, arrangement and equipment of the nursery, and of play rooms or work shops for use in later years. A cheerful, comfortable and sunny breakfast room and dining room, and the grouping of comfortable furniture about a well-placed fireplace in the living room do much to encourage family life. Happy comradeship between parents and children and cooperative activity in fields of mutual interest are a chief means of wholesome family life and happy affectionate domestic relationships, mutual understanding and effective guidance of the personality and character development of the child.

The Committee in submitting the Standards which follow recognizes that these standards are far from what the mass of the people are able to enjoy at the present time. Inevitably the vast majority of our population must live in old houses, as less than 3% of our population is accommodated in new dwellings each year.

In drawing these standards little specific mention has been made of apartment houses. The Division of Building and Housing of the United States Department of Commerce reports as a result of its studies that a relatively small proportion of the families with children live in multiple dwellings outside of two or three of our largest cities. Rural and village families—which constitute nearly half of our population—and families in small towns and suburbs in the vast majority of cases live in detached residences which are the more ideal type of dwelling for children. Wherever it is necessary for families with children to live in apartment houses the latter should so far as possible be of the Garden type, with careful orientation of the building for sunshine in all apartments and rooms, fire-proof, sanitary, and with provision for playgrounds and inside play-space for children.

In applying these standards to farm homes and other homes in rural districts there will be little difficulty, except that it should be recognized that provision of safe and ample water supply, of adequate plumbing and facilities to render housework as easy as possible are important. Equipment for lighting, and possibly also for heating as well as for sanitation, may have to be somewhat more primitive but should be rendered safe and healthful.

Standards give something to work towards. It is possible to incorporate most of these standards in new dwellings for any income group though it is recognized that certain of those relating to equipment and fireproofing and to the provision of a play room or nursery would seem to be out of the question to many contractors, realtors and home-builders. Good management in the home can also largely overcome defects in equipment or prevent injury arising therefrom. Old

homes—defective in many particulars—can step by step be brought up to standard, beginning with those matters which seem most urgent and bearing in mind always the more fundamental needs of the child.

Even in those cases where the standards seem impractical because of their cost, they may when judiciously applied result in enhancing the sales value of the property and in reducing maintenance costs.

In cities, building codes and zoning laws already lead to the incorporation of many of these standards in all new construction, and improvements in such laws raise the requirements from time to time. In general, however, such legislation provides only for such protection of health and safety as may seem practical and expedient at the time the law is framed. Progressive improvement of such laws helps to make these standards increasingly available even for those citizens who are unaware of them and of their importance. To an increasing extent through city planning and zoning the amenities of life are becoming available to our city and suburban population. It is impossible, however, through law to provide universally all of the conditions that are essential to wholesome living.

It is hoped through the consideration of the suggestions which follow—which are based on studies made by leading specialists in the field of housing and home economics—that housing will be considered increasingly with reference to its effect upon the health, protection and welfare of children. No other aspect of the subject is as important as this, for it is the prerogative of parents to make any necessary and reasonable sacrifices which will give their children a better start in life and a better chance than they themselves had to grow to their full mental, moral and physical stature.

In substance, therefore, we may say that these standards appear to the Committee to represent desirable and reasonable objectives which may wisely be considered by all groups interested in housing and child welfare and toward which they may direct their efforts. They may also serve as a check list of the housing needs of children which parents may wisely take into consideration with reference to their applicability to their own domestic needs in buying or building a home.

HOUSING STANDARDS

A. NEIGHBORHOOD

1. The neighborhood should be primarily residential. Homes should not be within an industrial district.
2. It should be protected by zoning laws, where necessary supplemented by deed restrictions.

It is perhaps the usual rule that zoning regulations should be supplemented by deed restrictions. Carefully drawn deed restrictions should apply to all lots in residential districts, whether sold or unsold. They should not be about to expire and they should be drawn in such a way as to permit of modification under proper safeguards every 20 to 30 years.

3. The preferable location for a home is on a minor street so planned as not to be inviting to through traffic.

In cases where apartment houses or single-family houses are located on major streets provision should be made for adequate set-backs, for the planting of roadside trees and grass borders and for protection from traffic dangers.

In new sub-divisions it is better to have streets run northeast by southwest, and northwest by southeast, so that the possibility of having rooms with due north exposure may be obviated.

4. Residences should be located within relatively easy access of churches, schools, civic, cultural and shopping centers.

Reasonable proximity to places of employment for each of the working members of the household should also be taken into consideration, so that a minimum of time will be lost in transit between work and home and a maximum amount of time made available for family life and for common activities of parents and children.

5. Neighborhood stores should be so located as not to be detrimental to the residential character of the neighborhood and should be so designed and treated with reference to set-backs and planting as to enhance the attractiveness of the district they serve.

6. Neighborhoods should so far as possible have charm and distinctiveness and be free from ugliness and monotony and conditions which tend to depress or humiliate the family. Street trees and grass strips should be provided on all residential streets and there should be frequent small parks within the district.

In neighborhoods where there are row houses or detached houses built from identical plans individuality can be secured through planting and through the use of window boxes, porch and garden furniture, etc.

7. Children should not have to depend upon the street for their play. Play space should be provided either in individual yards, or in yards thrown together, or in accessible and safely approached neighborhood playgrounds under conditions of adequate supervision and with adequate play equipment. Careful attention should be paid to the landscaping of the playgrounds, so as to provide shade trees—at locations which will not interfere with play activities—and shrubs, hedges or grass borders, so that the playground may not detract from the appearance of its neighborhood.
8. Residences should not be unduly near railroads, aviation landing fields, public garages, stables, dumps, marshes or obnoxious industries.
9. The neighborhood should be free from smoke, dust, odors, fumes, noise and heavy traffic.
10. Residences should not be located on land that is frequently flooded or so low that it is damp or subject to difficulties in sewage disposal. Areas of low lying land improperly or insufficiently drained and areas of made land where decayable matter has been used to make the fill should be avoided as residence sites.
11. The neighborhood should be free from "moral nuisances" such as disorderly houses, centers of liquor traffic and gambling houses.
12. Alleys are objectionable in residential districts and should not be planned in new sub-divisions. Existing houses fronting on alleys should be abandoned under a comprehensive plan.
13. Steep grades should be avoided in streets.

B. Lot

1. House lots should be wide enough so that each room shall have sufficient light from open spaces on its own lot without depending upon its neighbors.

The problem here is to provide adequate light and sunshine for the middle rooms of houses which are more than two rooms deep. Front and back rooms can secure their light from street and yard, but the middle rooms are dependent upon light which comes over the roofs of neighboring dwellings and hence require wider side yards.

2. Suitable play space should be provided in the yards to supplement neighborhood resources and should be so located that the play activities of small children can be easily observed by the mother while engaged in her daily routine.
3. If outdoor space for drying clothes is provided it should be properly screened so as not to render the neighborhood unattractive.

Vine-covered lattices and hedges usually make the most satisfactory screens.

4. The lot should be properly graded or drained so that there will be no standing water.
5. Trees, shrubs and vines should be planted as they provide an attractive setting and furnish shade and privacy.
6. Private garages and any out-buildings should be easy of access, fire safe, and so placed as not to interfere with the lighting of neighboring residences or with their attractiveness of outlook.
7. Proper provision should be made for the storing and disposal of garbage, rubbish, ashes and other household refuse. These should be kept in covered containers of ample capacity which shall be fireproof, waterproof, rustproof, and so placed and maintained that they will not interfere with the healthfulness, appearance or attractiveness of the premises.

C. HOUSE EXTERIOR

1. The house should be so designed and placed upon the lot as to provide for adequate sunning and natural lighting of all rooms. There should be direct sunshine at some time of day in each room throughout the year. No room should have only a north exposure.

Sunshine is recognized as one of the most important means to vigorous health in childhood, and as circumstances often make it necessary to keep children indoors at various ages the adequate sunning of rooms is one of the most important means to child health. In planning new houses it is impossible to place them at an angle to the points of the compass so that there will be no north rooms, but if the street layout of the city is such as to make north rooms inevitable the planning should provide for additional windows to either the east or west. The north rooms would therefore be corner rooms.

2. Covered porches should not be so placed as to reduce unduly the natural lighting of rooms. No room should receive its sole natural light from windows opening upon covered or glassed-in porches.
3. Ugliness, excessive ornamentation and unpleasant color combinations should be avoided in the exterior of the home. The best effects are ordinarily secured through simplicity in the architecture.
4. All materials in house construction should be sound and durable. Houses should be well-built in every respect.
5. Houses to be safe should be fire resistive.

There is considerable loss of life annually of children in America because of the prevailing practice of building houses that are not fire resistive. To families or communities that consider it impossible to reach ideal standards of construction immediately it might be stated that the minimum of protection for houses includes fire resistive roof coverings and exterior walls, adequate fire-stopping between studs to prevent passage of fire through walls and floors, protection around sills and pipe openings, and the use of fire resistive materials to protect adequately all portions of the house where lighting or heating equipment may cause danger or through which fire might spread. Chimneys should be well built and properly flue-lined.

6. Foundations should be dampproof, sound and durable. Houses should be securely anchored to their foundations and the roofs should be securely anchored to the house.
7. Buildings should be properly insulated against dampness, heat, cold and sound.
8. Houses should be kept in good repair in all their parts.

Construction and maintenance should be such as to prevent dilapidation and disrepair, such as loose railings, rotten boarding, etc. Special attention should be paid to the use of materials and methods of construction which experience has demonstrated to be safe or to new materials and methods of construction which give reasonable promise of being satisfactory. Construction and maintenance should keep roofs and walls free

from leaks, and rain gutters and leaders should be so placed as to prevent accumulations of rain water and should be made free from clogging and leaking. There should be insulation against dampness and ventilated air-space under the roof to protect from extreme heat or cold. Depending upon climatic conditions the house should be properly insulated against heat and cold.

D. HOUSE INTERIOR—GENERAL

1. The room arrangement in the house plan should be such as to make it possible to avoid lost motions, to save unnecessary steps and facilitate housework. There should be relatively easy access from room to room but it should also be possible to close each room off from the others when desired.
2. Each room should have adequate natural ventilation. Cross or through ventilation should be had either by placing windows on two sides of each room or by having doors so placed in line with windows that there will be a moving current of air.

Good natural ventilation involves ample provision for the intake of outside air, for the removal of used air, and for keeping air continuously in motion. This should be possible without sacrifice of privacy. The use of artificial systems of ventilation should not be necessary.

3. Where climatic conditions make it necessary air—so far as it is reasonably possible—should be conditioned with regard to temperature and humidity.
4. Each room should have at least one window, but preferably two or more, opening directly on a permanent open space sufficient in size to admit adequate light and sunlight. The total window space should not be less than 15 square feet in area; the tops of windows should be as near the ceiling as is consistent with good architectural design. Windows should be so constructed that they can be opened either throughout all of their area or at both top and bottom.

Tentative standards of the International Congress on Illumination held at Lake Saranac in 1928 suggest that at least some of the sky should be visible from table height over a considerable part of the room's area and that sunlight should be able to penetrate through at least half of the depth of the room.

In buildings in which walls are unusually thick and in regions in which the smoke nuisance is prevalent the size of windows should be increased beyond the standards given above.

5. The room should be so designed that there will be suitable space for the principal pieces of furniture and so that these will not be in the way of doors, windows or closets.

Radiators would often best be recessed to save space and permit access to windows and should be screened so as to protect children.

Fireplaces should be located with reference both to appearance and the grouping of furniture around them.

Doors, windows and such immovable equipment as radiators should be so placed as to provide adequate wall space for furnishings appropriate to the room.

Particular attention should be paid in the planning for provision of wall space in sleeping rooms adequate for the location of beds with reference to cross ventilation.

6. Rooms should be generous in size, not only sufficient to accommodate the furniture but large enough to give a sense of space. Rooms should be high especially in hot climates to insure coolness, adequate ventilation and the psychological benefit that comes from spacious quarters.

A living room 12 feet by 15 feet—180 sq. ft. in area—is adequate for most purposes. Other rooms may be somewhat smaller if properly planned with reference to light, air and space needs. In private dwellings rooms 8 feet 6 inches high are permissible, but in multiple dwellings nothing less than 9 feet should be permitted.

7. The down-stairs common rooms, including the living room and dining room and also the parlor and music room, if provided may often advantageously be

designed to open into one another so as to facilitate the entertainment of guests, though it should also be possible to close off each room for privacy so that any member of the family may entertain personal guests separately.

8. The sleeping quarters should be sufficiently separated from the living quarters to insure privacy. At least one bathroom should be reached from a private hall. Privacy should be provided by having each bedroom reached without passing through any other bedroom. In two-story houses the provision of a wash bowl and water closet on the first floor is often desirable, in addition to the bathroom on the sleeping floor.
9. The kitchen should be cheerful and attractive. It should be easy of access to the dining room and so located in relation to dining and living room that odors of the kitchen and noises will not penetrate to the rest of the house.

The kitchen should preferably be compact and rectangular in shape. There are four major functions to be performed in the kitchen, namely, the preparation of food, cooking, serving and clearing away. In addition to this it is desirable to have a center for the planning of household activities which should be equipped with desk and telephone and also serve as a rest center.

The larger built-in equipment should be grouped according to its use and arranged along the walls in a nearly continuous working surface. Windows should be above working equipment and the equipment not used in the preparation and cleaning away of meals, as well as doors and closets should be grouped remote from the working centers.

Working equipment should be so placed as to obviate overreaching and unnecessary stooping. The height of working surfaces should be adjusted to the individual worker.

It is desirable that as much equipment as possible should be built in, so as to prevent the collection of dirt and dust. It is often desirable to place the stove in an alcove with only the front accessible. Toe space under working surfaces makes for comfort, and if cabinets are built to the ceiling there will be fewer spaces on which dust may collect. All surfaces should be smooth and easily cleaned with soap and water. There should be no unnecessary angles.

A hood over the stove to carry heat and fumes away is desirable. Gas stoves should be vented by a flue to the chimney or to the outer air.

The windows should be located for a pleasant view and for supervision of outdoor play space.

10. A nursery if provided should be light and cheerful. The walls should be of hard finish and walls and floors should be smooth and easily cleaned.

The following detailed suggestions have been drawn up for the Committee by teachers in the nursery school maintained by Teachers College at Cornell University and are submitted as suggestions to families that are in a position to provide a special room for this use:

The floor area should be at least 84 square feet for each child. Artificial lighting should be high and indirect. If side lights are used they should be out of child's reach and the light force should be shielded. Hard wood floors or floors overlaid with battleship linoleum or cork are recommended since most of the child's play is on the floor. The bed space for the children should be away from the area in which the toys are kept.

The nursery should be situated near a lavatory and near the mother's work center in order to save her time and steps and at the same time provide the child with necessary supervision.

The room should be convertible to other uses when there is no longer need for it as a nursery.

11. In cold climates entrances should not be direct to living room and kitchens. In general, direct entrance to the living room is not desirable.
12. Steep stairs should be avoided. Landings should be broad. Triangular turns on stairs are unsafe and undesirable. Handrails or balustrades within the reach of young children should be provided on all stairs including those leading to the cellar and attic. All stairs should be adequately lighted and where there are young children it is often advisable to place gates at the tops of stairs.
13. Closet space should be ample for the needs of each member of the family and should be so located as to serve its purpose most conveniently.

The closet for outdoor wraps should be on the entrance floor convenient to the door and reached without passing through any of the rooms. There should be a separate closet for children's outdoor wraps or else special provision should be made for them in this closet through low hooks and rods and low shelves or other special equipment for overshoes.

Clothes closets should be provided with rods and of sufficient depth to freely take clothes hangers with clothes upon them.

Broom closets should be located in the back hall entry of kitchen.

Linen closets should be located in the hallway of the sleeping quarters and close to the bathroom.

All closets should have doors and there should be knobs on the inside so that they can be opened by children.

14. Storage space ample in amount—reasonably accessible and free from dampness, and properly lighted by natural or artificial light—should be provided for household possessions. This includes space for the storage of vegetables and fruits, trunks and bags, coal, wood and other fuel, and for children's outdoor play and equipment and seasonal or temporarily discarded possessions.
15. Some place should be provided as a play room for children. In case the extra room cannot be afforded by the family this may be either a corner of a bedroom or nursery or enclosed porch or of some other room, or in the case of older children a portion of a well-lighted and well-ventilated shed or attic. As the play room is outgrown it can be converted to some other use appropriate to the needs of the family. Special provision should be made through low drawers and cupboards for children's play things.
16. There should be adequate provision for privacy for each member of the family. Each child should have a place where he can be undisturbed and quiet and have opportunity for uninterrupted study of home lessons or for reading or play.
17. There should be a workshop—which can usually be located in a dry, sunny, well-ventilated basement, shed, garage or attic—in which the men and boys of the house can putter.
18. Generally a sleeping room for each person is desirable. Sleeping arrangements should be made with due regard to uninterrupted sleep, health, reasonable privacy and the individuality of the child. It is undesirable to have two children occupy the same bed whatever their age.
19. Paint and wall coverings should in both color and texture be cheerful, restful, attractive and not over-stimulating. Woodwork and walls should be easy to keep clean.
20. Floors should be strong, smooth, tight and level, comfortable to stand and walk on, durable and easily cared for. In color, design and finish they should harmonize with the rest of the room. They may be of wood, cement, tile, linoleum, cork or other composition, according to the purpose to be served. If of wood the boards should be well matched hardwood, preferably quarter sawn. Tile should be laid on cement. Linoleum should be cemented to the floor over a layer of felt.
21. Repair of all surfaces, floors, stairs, ceilings, walls, should be adequate for safety.

E. FUNDAMENTAL EQUIPMENT

1. Water supply should be adequate in amount, clean, and free from pollution. There should be conveniently located outlets in kitchen, bathroom and cellar and for outside use in watering lawns and gardens. In rural districts or those beyond the reach of municipal water-supply the well or spring should be so situated and protected as to avoid contamination. The water should be piped into the house and if necessary provision should be made for adequate protected storage. An ample supply of hot water is essential.
2. Modern sanitary plumbing fixtures, noiseless, easily flushed, cleaned and vented should be provided. All pipes should be of durable type with tight joints and traps readily accessible for cleaning or repairs. Water closets may be located in compartments separate from the bathroom, well-lighted and ventilated to the outer air. Water closet accommodations should never be located out of doors.

3. Heating appliances should be of such types and sizes as will heat all parts of the house adequately. As there is danger of overheating as well as of underheating it is often desirable to provide for thermostat control. Provision for humidification is also desirable.
4. Artificial lighting should avoid dangers from fire and should not cause eye-strain. Outlets should be sufficient in number and so located as to make it possible to engage in any kind of household activity such as cooking, serving of food, cleaning, play, or studying under conditions that are convenient and comfortable. Too intense lighting should be avoided.
5. The refrigerator should be designed for thorough circulation of cold air. Proper insulation requires an efficient heat retarding material of adequate thickness between inner and outer walls. This material should be compact, non-deteriorating, moisture-proof and germ-proof and odorless. All parts of the refrigerator should be easily cleaned. Proper drainage should be provided. The drain pipe should be easily accessible for cleaning. For mechanically cooled refrigerators further requirements are: quiet, dependable and economical automatic operation; minimum of service maintenance; freezing of water in a reasonable length of time; accessibility for repairs; freedom from wear of moving parts; safety of operation of exterior moving parts, of electrical apparatus or of burners. The refrigerator should be level and should be placed in as cool and protected a position as is compatible with convenient service.
6. Desirable built-in equipment includes also kitchen cupboards, preferably flanking the sink, built-in ironing boards, a passway between kitchen and dining room, china closets, bookshelves, window seats with storage space underneath, shelves and drawers in linen closets, low drawers, cupboards and hooks for children's toys or other possessions, in the playrooms or the children's bedrooms. Each of these should be planned with a view to convenience in use.
7. All electric wiring and equipment—including the radio—should be installed according to standard safety practices and certified to by the properly constituted public authorities and by fire underwriters. The installation of electric apparatus near sinks, laundry tubs, bath tubs and lavatories where shock hazards from heedless use are greatest should be avoided. Non-absorptive insulating sockets for fixtures near such conveniences are a wise safety precaution. Fuses and switches should be enclosed and so located as to be inaccessible to children. An ample supply of base plugs and double convenience outlets are desirable and permit maximum service. Hall lights and lights for cellar stairs should be controlled by three-way switches at top and bottom of stairs.
8. Shut off cocks for gas meters should be accessible and controlled by a locked box and manipulated only by representatives of gas companies. The installation of slot meters should be avoided. Open flame gas jets are a fire hazard and should not be used. Gas or other open flame lighting fixtures should not be located near windows or other places where draperies may be hung. Gas ranges or water heaters and gas logs should have direct connection with chimney flues. Hose connections for gas stoves, table lamps and other gas apparatus should be placed several inches away from control cocks for lighting fixtures. Gas ranges should have automatic lighters.

DO HOMES COST TOO MUCH? AND WHY?

That few houses have been built in America for the ordinary workman and even for the better-paid skilled mechanic since the War cannot be gainsaid. Such homes as have been built have been for people higher up in the industrial scale with greater purchasing power.

Many reasons have been advanced for this situation, and many ingenious theories advanced. A Chicago contractor, Gerhardt F.

Meyne, in discussing Chicago's housing shortage a few months ago, put his finger on some of the important factors in the situation.

He said:

Many folks live in 2 and 3 rooms who ought to live in 6. The reason for this condition is that the consumer cannot afford the builder's product. There has been much talk about the effect of stock market speculation on the decline in building, and it has been said that the high cost of money was responsible. Certainly both of these factors have been contributory as retarding agents, but the main reason for a residential shortage is that the cost of construction is too great.

The family of the average wage earner today is confronted with the selection of one of two alternatives in solving its housing problem—it can choose newly built quarters restricted in size, or ample room without the refinements of convenience and desirable location, but it cannot afford all of these features.

Families dwelling in restricted quarters are housed, but they have only a small fraction of the space which was considered adequate 15 or 20 years ago. At that time 4 rooms were considered to be the minimum in which it would be possible to found a household. The average family required 6 or 7 rooms, and these rooms were much greater in size than those that are being built today. Now 2 or 3 rooms is the average size, and the 1-room apartment is very common. Even in these restricted quarters the rent is too high for the income of the average worker, and in many cases can be met only with the aid of the woman in the family as an additional wage earner.

The family budget is not capable of taking care of all of the needs, and the chief reason for this, since housing is of first importance and must be provided, is that rents are too high. The reason that rents are high is that there must be a reasonable return on the investment in the building. An owner must receive \$18 or \$20 per room in conveniently located neighborhoods and the consumer cannot afford to rent as much space as he desires. The family of today does not occupy small quarters by choice, but through sheer economic necessity. Years ago a man usually paid 25% of his wages for rent and got 4, 5, or 6 rooms or a house. Today considerably more than 25% of his income goes for rent, and he occupies nowhere nearly the amount of space he should get in proportion; in fact he gets much less room than the 25% of other days purchased for him.

Now, why are rents high? Because the materials and labor that go into a building are high. I believe that comparatively few people think of the cost of raw material in terms of the cost of fuel and transportation and haulage or drayage, yet these are the largest items of cost that go into the establishment of material prices, and consequently are the largest items of cost in a building. An excellent example of just how fuel and freight costs affect building costs is seen in the reason for the present cost of common brick.

The price of common brick in Chicago is \$12 per thousand, and it has been the same for quite a few years. During this period of stable price in common brick, production methods and the use of machinery have tended to reduce the cost, but at the same time the retarding factor to decreased prices has been increased—fuel cost and transportation and drayage costs. Thus, in the face of a general lowering of factory

overhead and production costs, it is seen that the consumer reaps no benefit, and simply because he is unable to get the product from the factory unless he pays a transportation premium. There is no profit accruing to the material man, and certainly the manufacturers and producers get no large dividends, especially in rough materials such as stone and sand. Still the cost of building is too high.

What is the cause of these high freight rates and fuel costs? The answer is that the railroads, teaming and trucking interests and mines are in the power of labor monopolies. When the railroads were taken over by the government in 1918 as a wartime measure, Labor demanded a higher wage scale, and without regard to the national welfare, became insistent and finally got what it wanted. When the railroads were turned back to private management, Labor again demanded a higher rate, and has made additional demands since then. Strike threats have carried the point for them. Freight rates have risen, and with them building costs have risen.

Another important element in the high cost of building is the high price of building labor. Building mechanics are supposed to be receiving \$1.50 to \$1.75 per hour, yet most building mechanics are not employed for as many as 200 days in the year. A good share of them find employment for only a comparatively few days in the year. If we can bring the annual employment period for building mechanics to 250 days in the year at a fair wage, the fellow who is a potential buyer or renter of the building mechanics' products can afford a decent place in which to live. Just exactly what good is a wage scale of \$1.75 per hour when the man who has it gets no chance to earn it? It is the average daily wage scale over a period of a year that must be considered. As conditions now stand the man who works 52 weeks a year at a lower scale not only pays a higher proportionate amount for rent than the building mechanic pays for shoes, clothing and food, but in addition he contributes to the support of the same mechanic during his periods of idleness by being forced to pay rent which is determined in a large part by a wage scale figured to in part compensate the idle period.

Today there are 30,000 building mechanics walking the streets, and still there is no reduction in building costs. The theory of a high wage scale and no work acts to keep the price beyond the means of a large number of potential consumers, and a real demand is converted into a permanent unsatisfied demand that is used as an excuse to maintain high wage scales in one industry. In reality the theory operates only to stifle building activity by depriving those workers who do not exercise a monopoly, of a decent house to live in. Finally it reacts to destroy the market that the monopoly of high wages erroneously refuses to satisfy.

I am in favor of labor unions as long as they protect themselves and the community, but not when they inflict their demands to the detriment of the community. Organized building labor must not make itself a parasite on other industries. It is a patent fact that there is a maladjustment of wage scales when producers in other industries cannot afford the products of the builder, and if we are not to lower any wages we are confronted with a serious problem in balancing the division of earnings which must be solved before building will proceed. Maybe other industries can do what Ford promises—*increase wages.*

SHOULD BUILDING COSTS BE REDUCED?— AND HOW CAN THEY?

Is the cost of building too high? Are building costs so prohibitive that the ordinary family is unable to acquire its own home? Many people think so.

The official figures showing the kinds of living accommodations that are being constructed in recent years indicate a very great decrease in the number of private houses built and a very great increase in the number of apartments and other forms of multiple dwellings constructed, which would seem to point in the same direction.

Whether this decrease in home building and home ownership is due to the high cost of building or whether it is due to changed habits of living of the American people and a different emphasis placed on different things, no one knows. Everybody has an opinion one way or the other, but so far as actual facts are concerned the country is quite in the dark.

Is it true that the great mass of the American people to-day prefer to spend their money for radios, automobiles, talking machines, better clothing, better food, rather than spend it on a home? A lot of people think so. The organized realtors of the country certainly think so, for they are busying themselves in various ways to offset this "new competition", as they call it, to which they attribute the falling off of home building and home ownership.

As a factor in this situation, the realtors of the country deem the high cost of building and the difficulties of acquiring a home a vital consideration. Apparently, others think so too. For without that feeling and recognition of the decrease in home ownership and home building President Hoover would doubtless never have called into being his White House Conference on Home Building and Home Ownership, referred to elsewhere in this issue.

While all agree that building costs are too high, the situation is very much like Mark Twain's remark about the weather—"Everybody talks about it, but no one does anything about it."

HOMES AND AUTOMOBILES

Recently there has been a recrudescence of interest in the possibility of reducing the cost of building homes, following a statement occurring in the Annual Report of Frederic Keppel, President of the Carnegie Corporation of New York, in which he contrasts the ease and simplicity with which a man to-day buys an automobile compared

with the difficulties under which he has to acquire his home. He says on this point:

It is a commonplace that a man buying an automobile today pays about half the price he would have had to pay a few years ago and gets twice as good an article. If, however, he has to build a home, he will find the conditions just about reversed. The only reason for this absurd situation is that one industry has profited by first-rate scientific and engineering thought and the other has not. It certainly cannot be laid to the rising cost of material and labor, since this has affected both industries alike. Here again a Foundation devoted to the study of housing problems and equipped to experiment in different types of design and construction would have the chance to make a contribution of inestimable significance toward the improvement of present conditions.

A statement such as this coming from the head of a great Foundation like the Carnegie Corporation as well as from a man of Mr. Keppel's discernment and reputation for clear thinking would naturally have much currency.

GROSVENOR ATTERBURY'S PIONEER WORK

That the ideas thus expressed by President Keppel have occurred to other students of the situation in recent years is well known. The pioneer in this field in America—certainly in the architectural profession—was Grosvenor Atterbury, the distinguished New York architect.

Mr. Atterbury for the past 20 years and more has not only carried on active research into the possibilities of reducing the cost of building small homes, but has made a number of practical demonstrations of this possibility, notably at Forest Hills Gardens as well as elsewhere.

Recently Mr. Atterbury has presented the results of his studies, research and experience in an attractive pamphlet entitled, "The Economic Production of Workingmen's Homes", as he puts it, "An Outline of a Scientific Solution of the Housing Problem and its Relation to the Development of the City, with Illustrations of Actual Results Obtained from Researches and Demonstrations, 1904-1925."

H. G. Wells, the British author who has always delighted in prophecy, nearly 30 years ago, in his book "Anticipations" set forth his feelings about the methods employed in building a small house, as follows:

I find it incredible that there will not be a sweeping revolution in the methods of building during the next century. The erection of a house wall, come to think of it, is an astonishingly tedious and complex business; the final result exceedingly unsatisfactory. It has been my lot recently to follow in detail the process of building a private dwelling-house, and the solemn succession of deliberate, respectable, perfectly satisfied men who have contributed each so many days of his life to this accumulation of weak compromises, has enormously intensified my constitutional amazement at my fellow-creatures. The chief ingredient in this particular house-wall is the common brick, burned earth, and but one step from the handfulls of clay of the ancestral mud hut, small in size and permeable to damp. Slowly, day by day, the walls grew tediously up, to a melody of tinkling trowels. * * *

Everything in this was hand work, the laying of the bricks, the dabbling of the plaster, the smoothing of the paper; it is a house built of hands—and some I

saw were bleeding hands—just as in the days of the pyramids when the only engines were living men. * * * I fail to see the necessity of—and accordingly I resent bitterly—all these coral-reef methods. Better walls than this, and better and less life-wasting ways of making them, are surely possible.

Mr. Atterbury's method of reducing the cost of houses was, as our readers will recall, the use of large concrete slabs—one slab being sufficient in size to constitute one of the walls of a room—cast on the job and raised into place by a crane.

Other architects have also attempted to solve this problem of reducing the cost of small houses. One of these who has made notable contributions to the subject is Robert Tappan, who at two Conferences of the National Housing Association has set forth his ideas with regard to unit construction and the use of standardized parts of buildings—his latest ideas taking the direction of steel framed houses, as he puts it “built like a skyscraper,” and which he is able to erect in a period of less than 3 days. Unfortunately neither Mr. Atterbury's concrete slab houses nor Mr. Tappan's steel frame houses have been taken up commercially.

OTHERS BURN THEIR FINGERS

The City Housing Corporation of which A. M. Bing is President in the beginning of its work set itself among other tasks the problem of reducing housing costs through research into the cost of building. In 1926 the Board of Directors of that Company set aside a fund of \$50,000 from their earnings to carry on research work in new construction methods and materials. The first thing that they did was to employ the services of an engineer to supplement those of their regular staff and to consider the various systems that were suggested as improvements in building construction. The company's action in setting aside this fund for research purposes received much publicity and the Directors were swamped with details of different investments.

THREE ESSENTIALS TO COST REDUCTION

After studying all the material submitted to them—a process which necessarily took some time—they came to the conclusion that to justify any *radical* departure from current building practice—at any rate to accomplish very much by such departure—the new process must do 3 things.

1. It must supply the structural shell of the house.
2. It must contain within itself an exterior finish.
3. It must also constitute an interior finish.

In other words, while it might be desirable to improve the shell of the house, it was not going to be possible to save much money if the new invention were merely the substitution of a different type of shell from that then used, and if the new process necessitated an additional exterior and interior finish.

Grosvenor Atterbury's concrete slab house seemed to them to answer these 3 requirements, for it did all of the things which to their mind seemed essential. Excellent as Mr. Atterbury's work was, it did not, however, seem to the City Housing Corporation that he had carried the experiment to a point where the system which he advocated was commercially useable, although his suggestions to their mind offered the best lead toward an ultimate solution of the problem.

Anxious to develop something of this nature that could be used for the new houses at Radburn, the town in New Jersey which they have since developed, the officers of the City Housing Corporation—during that period while they were surveying the ground work, developing the town plan of this new community—set up a small and inexpensive experiment station at Radburn in a large vacant barn. They had been in touch for some time with the Portland Cement Association who were not very encouraging, but in view of the large development which they were about to undertake, and as a result of personal intercession on their behalf by a large cement manufacturer who had become very much interested in the work that the City Housing Corporation was trying to do, the Portland Cement Association assigned to help them in working out this problem an engineer whom they considered best fitted for the work by education and experience.

They proceeded with experimental castings with the idea of eliminating what to them seemed some of the weak points of Mr. Atterbury's arrangement—retaining, however, the benefits of what he proposed. The results, however, proved disappointing. These experiments covered a period of about 6 months during part of which time the Portland Cement engineer was working constantly with them. They had hoped that even though they did not succeed in developing a method that would enable them to build an entire house by the new process, they would, at least, be able to effect economies in such parts of the house as the porches, roofs, etc. To their great disappointment, however, up to the time the experiments were discontinued, they were unable to develop anything of practical value.

The necessity of proceeding with the work of developing Radburn and a change in financial conditions led those responsible to feel that no more money could be diverted from construction work to research work at that time, and the experiments were therefore concluded. While

the City Housing Corporation has not definitely abandoned further research into this aspect of housing, it has postponed any further efforts in this direction.

NO INVENTOR WILLING TO TAKE A CONTRACT

A flood of light is thrown on the situation by the knowledge that they offered a contract to build houses to quite a number of proponents of new systems, but in no case was any one of them willing to accept such a contract.

THE RESEARCHERS ENTER THE FIELD

A more definitely organized effort to bring about reduction in the cost of houses through research into the processes of building was started a little over a year ago by a group of men interested in this field, though strangely enough most of them have been without practical experience in housing work.

Forming themselves into a Research Institute of Economic Housing, they have, without public announcement of their plans, held themselves together as a group in the hope that when funds became available they could carry out their desires. Following President Keppel's announcement, this group made a public announcement of its plans and purposes. It is still, we understand, awaiting the financial blessing of some great Foundation; for, it naturally cannot make bricks without straw—without funds it cannot carry on very extensive research work.

Their objective is to reduce the cost of housing by 20%, which they estimate will mean a saving of \$2,000,000,000 every 2 years. Discussing this matter recently, a spokesman for the organization said:

While we want 6 years for uninterrupted research we do not expect to remain silent as long as that. Furthermore, we are not committed to 20% or any other figure in reducing costs; we don't know. Also our reason for not seeking support from material supply dealers is not so much a fear that somebody will make money out of our possible recommendations, but that those who would maintain the status quo might obtain enough control of the research to stop it short of the housing revolution which we believe should be brought about.

Most of the effort thus far made towards reducing the cost of houses has taken the direction of seeking to reduce the cost of the *shell* of the house—as distinguished from the things that go into the house.

While the cost of the shell, or the building itself is still the major part of the cost of a house, the other elements that enter into this total cost are quite substantial ones. According to Henry Wright the cost of the shell of the ordinary house may be taken as from 45% to 60% of the total cost. Moreover, according to Ernest P. Goodrich, President

of the Research Institute for Economic Housing, the cost of the house itself is but 50% of the total cost of a home—the remaining cost being distributed as follows, 10% for the land, 25% for the municipal improvements such as sewers, water, grading, gas, electricity, streets and pavements, and 15% for the cost of financing.

THE COST OF THE SHELL IS BUT ONE FOURTH OF THE COST OF THE HOUSE

It is, therefore, seen that efforts to reduce the cost of the shell of the house will necessarily only concern themselves with from 45% to 60% of one half of the total cost of a home.

Lewis Mumford, who always writes in interesting fashion, in an article in the *Architectural Record* a few months ago, discussing this question of "Mass Production and The Modern House," points out that "the two new spots where mass production would take the place of present methods, namely, in the shell itself, and in the assemblage of the parts, offer only a minor field for reductions." As he says:

To cut the cost of the shell in half, is to lower the cost of the house a bare 10%.

He rightly adds. "A good part of the total cost of housing is represented by factors which, like the cost of money or land are outside the province of factory production; or, like the numberless constituent parts of the house, are already cheapened by mass production."

On the economic side of the problem and the important factor that a man who has not sufficient earning capacity cannot afford to buy the best home to live in, any more than he can buy the best of anything else, Mr. Mumford says:

Plainly, the architect cannot solve by any magical incantations the problem of supplying new houses to families whose income is not sufficient to cover the annual charges. There is no answer to that question except, as I said earlier, in the form of higher wages or state subsidy; although a wilful blindness to this fact is almost enough to establish a person as a housing authority in the United States.

Summing up the possibilities of mass production as a means of reducing the cost of houses and bringing them within the purchasing power of the lower income group, Mr. Mumford says:

The new houses might well be better than the present ones—they could scarcely be worse. But if better, they would not be radically cheaper; and since a new cost, a cost that is excessive in the motor industry, namely, competitive salesmanship, would be introduced, the final results promise nothing for the solution of our real housing problem—the housing of the lower half of our income group, particularly of our unskilled workers. The manufactured house no more faces this problem than the semi-manufactured house that we know today.

THE COST OF HIGH LIVING

May it not be that what makes the high cost of living today is the cost of high living, as pointed out by the late James J. Hill some years ago. More and more the people of this country are demanding luxurious ways of living. It has been often said that the laborer in America to-day enjoys luxuries and comforts that kings and princes did not know a few centuries ago, and the emphasis seems to be increasingly in this direction.

How many people who are about to buy a home, consider first the question of its sanitation? How many ask about its light and assure themselves that every room is afforded an abundance not only of light but of sunshine? How many assure themselves that that light and sunshine is a permanent possession and cannot be shut off by some other building that may be put on the next lot? How many home purchasers consider or concern themselves with whether their homes have cross ventilation in every room, thus assuring to them moving air—one of the most important elements in maintaining a healthful atmosphere in their homes. How many home purchasers or home builders know anything about or care anything about the extent to which the home is soundly constructed?

The things that catch the eye, the things that other people are having, the black-tiled bathroom, the electric refrigeration, the new types of equipment in dining room and pantry and elsewhere—these are the things that the average home buyer and home builder thinks about and on which he—or rather she—places emphasis. These are things that cost money—as we have seen, from 40% to 50% of the cost of the house is not in the building itself but in the things that go into that building.

A New York builder of large experience in the building field, G. Richard Davis, recently called attention to this factor in the rising cost of construction.

Mr. Davis said recently:

The demands made by tenants have greatly increased. In the average apartment house, for instance, room sizes are constantly changing, with a very strong demand for larger living and bedrooms and for smaller dining rooms and kitchens. Living conditions have been changed since the great war.

The kitchenette is a product of necessity. We are adapting ourselves to smaller kitchens and compact equipment. The electric ice machine is now asked for in even the most modest priced apartments. Garbage incineration, soundproofing partitions and floors, radio outlets, lighting switches and base plugs, laundry and storage facilities, open fireplaces, enclosed radiators, showers, chromium plated bathroom fittings, brass pipe, two-pipe modulated heating systems, are all additions to the requirements of the average tenants of today, as compared to twenty years ago.

These additions, improvements and betterments have all added to the cost of building construction, and when one estimates the increased cost of a building today as compared with two decades ago this must be taken into consideration.

That what goes into the building has much to do with its cost was strikingly illustrated by an article in one of the architectural journals a few months ago. That article described two very charming and attractive high class residences that had been built, one on Long Island, the other a few miles away in Westchester County. The house plans were practically the same, almost identical. The houses were equally attractive in appearance, both were by the same firm of architects. But the house on Long Island cost only \$40,000 to build, whereas the house in Westchester cost \$70,000, and they were built within a few months of each other.

The architect gives a detailed analysis in contrasting columns of the reasons for this difference in cost, which he finds lay chiefly in the "extras" that the owner of the house wanted in the latter case. The cubic contents of the houses were approximately equal. Both houses were well built, and yet by sacrificing personal preferences to more typical demands, the one house was built for almost half the cost of the other.

HOMES VERSUS RADIOS

That the average family in the United States could afford to purchase its own home, if it did not feel that other things such as radio sets and automobiles were more desirable, is evidenced by a recent survey made by the National Industrial Conference Board, contrasting a pre-war budget and the cost of living with a budget recently compiled by the U. S. Bureau of Labor Statistics from a systematic investigation of 100 workingmen's families in Detroit.

The average income among these 100 Detroit families, practically all derived from factory earnings, was \$1711.87. Under the prewar budget this income would have been divided in the following percentages: food 43.1%, housing 17.7%, clothing 13.2%, fuel and light 5.6% and sundries 20.4%.

The Bureau of Labor investigation shows the income now divided according to these percentages; food 32.3% in place of 43.1 before the War, housing 22.6 as compared with 17.7 in the earlier year; clothing 12.2 as compared with 13.2, fuel and light 6 as compared with 5.6, and *sundries* 26.9 as compared with 20.4.

The conclusion reached from this study by the National Industrial Conference Board is that there is a steady advance in living standards as indicated by the decreased proportionate income required for food and the marked increase in sundry expenditures, and the material increase in the cost of housing. They infer that the latter is due largely

to the increasing demand for modern baths and bathtubs, which they infer cannot be obtained without price.

That the economic factor is still the vital one in this question of cost of homes, has received striking confirmation by recent events, which seem to disprove Mr. Keppel's statement that the high cost of homes was not due either to the high cost of labor or the high cost of materials.

ECONOMIC FORCES DO THE TRICK

An economic depression and a period of unemployment have proved the contrary. For, the cost of building homes under the stress of these economic forces has been cut 20% from what it was prior to the depression.

The Research Institute for Economic Housing who were hoping at the end of 6 years by the expenditure of a million dollars to "bring about a great housing revolution" by reducing the cost of housing 20%, have been anticipated.

The normal play of economic forces has done this for them in a much shorter period.

HIGH COST THE CHIEF OBSTACLE TO HOME OWNERSHIP

That the realtors of the country are aroused to the menace to their business in the high cost of home ownership, was made evident in an address delivered in Chicago some months ago by Leonard P. Reaume, President of the National Association of Real Estate Boards. After calling attention to the fact that the greatest single business in the country is the real estate industry, and that its function is to provide housing for persons, for business, for commerce and manufactory, and that directly and indirectly it employs about $\frac{1}{4}$ of the country's labor, and that 15% of the total national income is devoted to its activities in new construction, replacement and repairs, Mr. Reaume proceeded to call attention to the importance of stimulating home ownership, and of removing the present obstacles to it.

To his mind, notwithstanding all the advances that have been made in business technic and new processes, there has been a retrogression in the market for homes for persons of small means. As he says, while other industries through improved technique and economies in manufacturing, have constantly reduced the price of their commodity and at the same time improved its quality—thus bringing it within the reach of the great masses of buyers—in the real estate industry they have pursued the opposite course.

He illustrated this by pointing out that during the last 15 years, when the Ford automobile has been cut in two in price and at least doubled in efficiency, the single-family dwelling has doubled in price without a corresponding increase in comfort, durability or beauty, and adds that because the cost of home ownership has doubled during the last 15 years, it has been placed out of the reach of the great majority of our population. He wisely says:

The instinct for home ownership is strong. It needs little or no encouragement. It needs only economic opportunity to function.

Taking the oft quoted figures that 84% of the family incomes in the United States aggregate \$2,000 or less and the figures of a survey made in his own city of Detroit not long ago which showed that the average family earnings were approximately \$1,800, Mr. Reaume points out that a family which earns the latter amount cannot afford to pay more than \$500 a year for housing and have sufficient funds left for food, clothes, education, insurance, savings, care of children, and the other normal requirements of civilized life.

He finds that \$500 a year is not sufficient to buy a home with civilized conveniences and modern facilities upon any terms that a person can pay to-day, and that the utmost that such a family can afford in the way of a home is one costing approximately \$4,500. But working men's homes are not to be had for that price to-day; in most cities they cost \$7,000, \$8,000 to \$9,000. As he points out, such homes require a monthly payment of \$70 to \$80, thus demanding half the total earnings of 4/5 of the people of the United States.

Mr. Reaume outlines 4 possible approaches to the problem of reducing the cost of home ownership in the United States. These are the following:

First: Reduction in the price of home sites.

Second: Reduction of the cost of building.

Third: Reduction of taxes.

Fourth: Reduction in cost of financing the purchaser.

Taking up the first of these, Mr. Reaume points out that the preparation of home sites by customary subdivision methods is exceedingly costly and wasteful, and urges that this whole process should be brought under some form of intelligent control and adjusted to the actual necessities of the community at the moment. While deprecating Government control or regulation, he urges a system of voluntary control which will overcome these difficulties. He also urges more efficient methods of using land. He calls attention to the fact that most subdividers make too many paved streets which are expensive to construct and to main-

tain, rightly calling attention to the fact that the automobile age requires wider and fewer thoroughfares with elimination of as many cross streets as possible. He points out that the old gridiron or checker-board plan which has been rightly held up to scorn by city planners for many years, is no longer adequate for conditions as they exist to-day, and says that we could close half of the cross streets in most of our cities without particular loss in traffic efficiency, and estimates that the saving in the cost of a lot would probably be as much as 15%.

The new methods employed at Radburn of long blocks with cul-de-sacs and separation of foot traffic from wheel traffic, with few cross streets, strongly commend themselves to him, not only because they make homes more desirable, but because they reduce the amount of land necessary for homes by a good proportion and also reduce the cost of street and other installations.

The second avenue of approach to reducing the cost of homes Mr. Reaume finds in reducing the cost of building.

He rightly emphasizes the antiquated methods that are still employed in home construction, pointing out that building materials are still being made to fit the size of a man's hand, and are transported to the site and assembled in the course of two or three months by the most expensive methods of hand labor that the world has ever seen, and rightly contrasts what would happen if automobiles were constructed in similar fashion. He strongly urges in place of these antiquated methods, the methods of modern industry, of factory fabrication and mass production, and says the layman can see no reason why a bathroom, for instance, should not be manufactured as a unit and put into its place complete. He does not see why wall sections cannot be developed which are complete both as to exterior and interior, and insulation which could be fitted into place.

To the old cry that standardization in the manufacture of houses will result in monotonous dwellings, he very rightly calls attention to the fact that we have monotonous and standardized homes at the present time, and says that the great masses of homes in most American cities are as like as two cracker boxes, and poorly built at that. Mr. Reaume sees no reason, however, for assuming that fabrication processes applied to dwellings need necessarily result in monotony, pointing out that the automobile industry probably makes more extensive use of mass production methods than any other commodity, yet it is possible for the buyer to choose between some 600 or 700 different models made by approximately 50 different companies—which he finds a wide enough range of choice for the taste of any man. The same, to his mind, would be true of fabricated dwellings produced for the

masses. He urges that the whole construction industry should study this problem.

In this connection it is significant that from 1904 to 1929, a period of 25 years, building costs increased from an index figure of 82 to 205; while during the same 25 years Ford automobile costs decreased from an index figure of 178 to 78, notwithstanding the fact that the improvements made in Ford cars far exceeded any improvements made in building. During this period, wages of a typical building trade, viz., bricklayers, increased 92% while production per man decreased 40%, a net increase in unit labor cost of 220%. During the same period, though factory wages increased more than bricklayers', 118%, production per man increased 49%, with a resulting increase in unit labor cost of only 50%—which indicates some of the reasons for the present high cost of building.

A third direction in which Mr. Reaume sees possibilities of removing present obstacles to home ownership, is in the reduction of taxes—local, state and federal. After pointing out that in the average city considerably less than 20% of the money expended by the local government and taken from taxpayers may be said to benefit real estate, he asks the question why 80 to 90% of the cost of local government should be saddled on the man who elects to own his home.

A fourth means of removing the obstacles to home ownership, Mr. Reaume finds in reducing the cost of financing the purchaser. He says if the financing costs of the home buyers are high it is due in large part to some of the high costs, waste and risks which have been previously indicated, and wisely points out that the financing of homes cannot be made cheap until many of the elements of risk and divided responsibility in the building and selling of homes that now exist are removed, and finds certain handicaps now existing in the laws of various states with respect to junior financing whose removal might be helpful. The usury law of many states makes second mortgage business as he says virtually a bootleg business. Other elements in the financing costs are recognized.

Mr. Reaume concludes his discussion of this subject with a plea to all those who are interested in encouraging home ownership to consult together to see if by some step the present obstacles to that desired end can be removed, pointing out that we must not lose sight of the fact that the home, in which we are all interested, is itself too costly at the present time for 80% of the American people to buy.

BUILDING COSTS GOING DOWN

A hopeful sign for the future of home building in this country is found in the rapidly decreasing cost of building, part of the present industrial depression. In the New York district, building costs are, in the opinion of competent observers, about 20% less than they have been in recent years, due largely to decreased prices for building materials. Hardware prices are down 20% or more, electrical fixtures are reported to have declined 17%, and heating equipment, paints and other products are down from 15% to 20%. Lumber has shown in recent months the most drastic decline in all the list of commodities.

Whether costs are due for a further decline no one can foretell. It would seem, however, as if the lowest prices have not been reached and that there must be a still further deflation of building costs before the country can be put once more on a healthy basis.

MORE OBSTACLES TO HOME OWNERSHIP

That other realtors throughout the country realize the reasons why home ownership is lagging, is evidenced by an address made by Henry Emery, a leading realtor of Cleveland, in an address to the Home Builders and Brokers Divisions of the Ohio Association of Real Estate Boards some months ago. On this occasion, Mr. Emery was attempting to forecast the changes that lie ahead of the real estate business, so that realtors might guide their course accordingly.

Pointing out that the average home buyer is unable to buy a lot and build a house and then pay the improvement assessments in addition to the house financing and amortization because his income is not sufficient, he envisions a totally different situation for the future.

Hereafter, the method of providing a complete home project—house, lot, and improvements paid—all properly financed, as he says, must replace the present method of selling merely pieces of land with improvements assessed, and then leaving to the individual purchaser the problem of building and financing his home. He finds the reason why many homes are now unoccupied and why there are so many foreclosures, to lie in these improvement assessments which either had not been known to the owner or were not reckoned with at the time the home was bought or built. He predicts that new subdivisions from now on will be designed to give greater lot area than heretofore, and greater care will be exercised in the matter of restrictions.

Pointing out the economic trend, Mr. Emery finds that wage scales are definitely downward and will continue so. As he says, the wage-earner's pay envelope—white-collar man's as well as industrial worker's—will contain less dollars from now than he has been receiving for some years past, and that the effect of this will be felt by the real estate business in a lessened market for small homes.

He adds that it will also mean more and more competition for the workingman's dollar on the part of the producers of luxuries and holds that to meet and overcome this competition during a period of reducing payrolls, is one of the major problems for realtors to consider seriously at the present time.

He believes that there will be more and more apartment dwellers and less and less home owners from now on.

PAYING FOR A HOME AS YOU WOULD BUY AN AUTOMOBILE

Somewhat in line with the efforts just described in seeking to make home ownership easy, is a plan that has been adopted in Kansas City, Missouri, inaugurated by the real estate board of that city. Under this plan, it is possible for the prospective home owner to purchase every service and material involved in the construction of a home in a single operation—very much as a person would purchase an automobile complete and not purchase its separate parts and then have them put together afterwards.

This new plan offers the home buyer a service whereby he can through an insured home purchase plan include in a stipulated monthly payment to a trust company all expenses necessary for his purchase—interest and principal payment on both first and second mortgage, if desired, annual taxes, and insurance payments. The trust company acts as trustee for the home purchaser, and relieves him of the responsibility of making these payments direct to the agencies to which they are due. The service is offered by the trust company without any charge to the home owner. The insurance clause of the agreement between the home buyer and the trust company provides that if the buyer is disabled permanently by accident or illness his payments are insured; if the home buyer should die before the home is completely paid for, his widow receives a deed to the property, free and clear of any mortgage, or subject only to a first mortgage, if the contract has specifically not included payment of the principal on the first mortgage. In case of accident or illness resulting in temporary disability, the home buyer is likewise protected in the matter of keeping up his payments.

Such a plan enables the home buyer to estimate his budget carefully, soundly and accurately, so that he does not find his joy in buying his home diminished when he has to meet difficult and necessary payments which he himself may have overlooked and forgotten to include when he calculated the expenses in which he involved himself, said P. A. Simonds, chairman of the Kansas City committee which developed the plan, in making a report before the local realtors. Convenience and protection are the salient features of the new type of contract, which should do much to facilitate, encourage and broaden home ownership.

PLENTY OF MONEY FOR HOME BUILDING

There is nearly a billion dollars "praying" to be borrowed for non-speculative home construction and ready to be passed out over the counters to-morrow morning in 46 cities in the United States according to Herbert U. Nelson, executive secretary of the National Association of Real Estate Boards.

People who have been saying that money is tight in the United States just haven't been around to their brokers lately; for, if they want it for sound building projects, they probably will be ushered right into the president's private office, said Mr. Nelson.

Because the Association felt that resumption of building asked by President Hoover had been delayed due to "timidity" on the part of the public to ask for construction loans, a survey on what is actually available in 46 widely separated cities was completed by the Association last July.

The survey, which is supported by documentary evidence from individual banks and mortgage houses, revealed that \$843,712,000 could then have been loaned in these 46 cities for non-speculative building. Lending institutions in Chicago reported the highest figure available—the returns from that city totaling \$300,000,000 ready to be loaned for this purpose.

Pointing out that much of the unemployment in the states has been due to a country-wide curtailment of residence and other construction, which has affected not only the building trades workers but the thousands of employees of factories manufacturing materials and equipment used in building, Mr. Nelson stated that the stock market crash of last fall and the subsequent business depression had scared people throughout the country from asking for construction loans.

"The man in the street is still talking hard times and really doesn't believe he could raise very much money for home building or any other

construction enterprise in which he might be interested," said Mr. Nelson.

He added:

We have believed for some time that the tide was turning and that money was again ready for sound building projects—especially for home building of a non-speculative character. For this reason we made a very careful survey on what is available in 46 cities scattered from coast to coast.

Inquiries addressed to local banks, mortgage houses, and representatives of insurance companies and others usually having funds to lend for such purposes stressed the point that we only wanted figures on non-speculative projects. It is only a resumption of building of this character which will produce steady incomes and good returns on investments that will aid business conditions. The financing of speculative enterprises or shaky projects which might fail to give the investors fair earnings would only add to the depression. Hundreds of the reporting financial institutions stated that their funds were ready, but only for sound enterprises.

Invariably these institutions, some of which bear names nationally known, expressed great preference for the individual home owner and declared that all of their available funds could be secured by dependable people undertaking home ownership.

The returns, which were collected and checked by the local real estate boards in the cities where the surveys were made also made it plain that these institutions understood that general totals for the cities were to be made public and that people would be urged to call upon them for funds up to these amounts, perhaps at once. It is significant that even very small towns show an adequate amount available for home construction and other building, so that all the money is not in the large towns, and people everywhere can undertake home ownership immediately if they wish to do so.

NOW IS THE TIME TO BUILD

Herbert U. Nelson, Executive Secretary of the National Association of Real Estate Boards, in a recent public statement points out that now is the time for people to be building homes. Building materials are the lowest they have been since 1926.

It is interesting to see how a few short months can work a revolution in building costs. It was only last January that Mr. Nelson was calling attention to the fact that the chief obstacle to home ownership and home building was the high cost of construction, pointing out that there had been an increase of approximately 100% in construction costs since 1913, and that during the same period the cost of other commodities had increased approximately but 60%; that the cost of automobiles had actually decreased about 25%, and that of Ford cars

about 50%. Since 1921 the cost of building an ordinary single-family home, according to Mr. Nelson, had increased approximately by \$1200.

It is most reassuring, therefore, to find Mr. Nelson pointing out as recently as the end of November that building material costs are the lowest that they have been since 1926, and that a home in California, which normally would cost \$6,000 to build can be built to-day for \$4,200.

Reviewing the changes in the index prices of building materials and building labor, Mr. Nelson advises persons who are planning to build a home to take advantage of the present situation, as the present economic factors are in favor of going ahead. Money is plentiful and can be had on easy terms for sound investment.

Skilled labor is more readily available than it has been for many years, and building material prices are lower than they have been for a long time. Lumber, for example, is 13.1% cheaper than it was a year ago; other building materials are proportionately low.

According to competent authorities the prices of building materials have been reduced 15 to 60% below the 1923 prices. According to B. G. Forbes, a well known observer of financial and economic trends, residential costs are lower by 25 to 35%. Lumber is selling at 25% under 1925 prices, cement, rock, and sand—the three ingredients of concrete—at almost 50% under prices of 5 years ago; wiring and electrical supplies are down more than 20%; plumbing materials are 10 to 15% cheaper; brick is 35% cheaper than in 1925; roof tiles 40% less; plaster about 40%; wood lath 50%; metal lath 30%.

In addition, there is a plentiful supply of skilled workers producing approximately 20% more, due to modern inventions, than they produced in 1923—an important factor in costs. Because of these low prices there has been a substantial increase in building throughout the country. This began to be noticeable in September and has continued throughout October, particularly in residential construction. In September the amount of residential construction increased 19% over that of August, contrasting with a usual seasonal decline of from 7 to 10%.

In addition money is plentiful. The savings banks deposits for the State of New York for September were the largest for any of the preceding 5 years for which monthly reports are available, and money is now available for sound investment in large quantities—both from banks and insurance companies.

From all of which it is again indicated that the quickest and simplest way to reduce excessive building costs is by ascertaining what

it is that makes the cost of building excessive and reducing those factors. Economic forces have done this in the present case, proving conclusively that the two chief factors in the cost of building are the cost of materials and the cost of labor—with the cost of financing a close third.

THE VANISHING HOME

That the American people are coming more and more to live in apartment houses and less in the single-family detached dwelling is evidenced by recent figures prepared by the U. S. Department of Labor, showing the extent of different kinds of residential construction in 257 identical cities in the United States in the year 1929, comparing these figures with similar figures gathered during the past 9 years, beginning with 1921. The most striking change evidenced in this 9-year period is the increase of the number of families who find their homes at the present time in multi-family dwellings and less and less in private dwellings—compared with the situation as it existed 9 years ago.

It is rather startling to learn that the proportion of families whose new living accommodations are provided in multi-family dwellings has doubled in that period. In 1921, 24.4% of all the residential accommodations provided in new buildings were found in multi-family dwellings; whereas last year, 48.6% of the families housed were thus housed. A corresponding change, though not proportionate, has taken place in the construction of new one-family dwellings. Last year, 40.2% of all families housed in new construction were housed in one-family dwellings, compared with 58.3% so housed 9 years ago. There has also been a startling decrease in the proportion of families housed in two-family dwellings. But 11.2% of all the housing accommodations provided in 1929 were in that class of building as compared with 17.3%, 9 years earlier.

Some interesting facts with regard to the tendencies and trends in different cities of the country are disclosed by this study of the Bureau of Labor Statistics.

In the 14 cities of the United States having a population of 500,000 and over, 64.4% of the new family dwelling units for which permits were issued during the calendar year 1929 were in apartment houses, 25.3% in 1-family dwellings, and 10.3% in 2-family dwellings. Dwelling accommodations were provided for 139,007 families during this year.

In New York City 58,320 families were provided for during the year 1929. Of this number, 83% were provided for in apartment houses and only 10.8% in 1-family dwellings. In the Borough of Manhattan 99.9% of the 18,067 families provided for were to live in apartment houses. In contrast, in the Borough of Richmond 61.6% of the new family dwelling units were provided in 1-family, and only 16.3% in multi-family dwellings. Chicago ranked next to New York in the percentage of new family dwelling units provided for in apartment houses, as 77.9% of the 18,837 families provided for in 1929 were to dwell in apartment houses.

Baltimore continues to be the outstanding city in the erection of 1-family dwellings. In the Maryland metropolis 3,022 families were provided for in 1929 and 92.7% were to live in 1-family dwellings. Pittsburgh, Philadelphia and Cleveland are the only other cities in this group which provided more than half of their new family dwelling units in single-family dwellings. In every city in the group except Baltimore fewer families were provided for in 1929 than in 1928.

Buffalo, Detroit, Milwaukee and Boston erected large numbers of 2-family dwellings. In Buffalo more new housing units were provided for in 2-family dwellings than in either 1-family dwellings or apartment houses.

Most of the cities having a population under 100,000 built more 1-family units than other types of residence construction. There were, however, notable exceptions. In Highland Park, Mich., 99.6% of the families were provided for in new apartments. Mount Vernon, N. Y.; Elizabeth, N. J., and Brookline, Mass., also provided a majority of new dwelling units of this type. Thirty-two cities having a population between 25,000 and 500,000 showed at least 90% of residential building in single-family homes.

IS "MODERNIZING" DESIRABLE?

In order to meet a sluggish market for the things that go into homes, there has been an organized movement throughout this country to urge upon housewives and others the desirability of bringing their homes up to date by so-called "modernizing"—displacing an older type of bathtub or sink or washbasin by something that is more up-to-date and more fashionable. The primary purpose of this movement has been a commercial one—an endeavor to find a market for certain products. To many it has seemed a mistake and a retrograde movement.

Discussing this question among others in an address before the Home Builders and Brokers Divisions of the Ohio Association of Real Estate Boards, Henry Emery, Cleveland realtor, some months ago in attempting to prophesy the changes ahead in the real estate business, had the following to say about the attempt to modernize old houses:

There is no market for old houses and there is no reason why there should be. When real estate brokers and dealers learn that a house—like everything else—is consumed in use, and are frank and honest enough to say so, there will be a healthier real estate market.

Old houses should be torn down and replaced with modern structures if they have outlived their usefulness and if the owners wish to continue living in the same neighborhood. Until the rapid growth of cities that policy was carried out. Today, with the modern home conveniences that exist a small house 20 or 25 years old is virtually valueless. Why endeavor to create a value for it when none exists? Why not place a value on the land as such—less the cost of demolishing the old structure?

A NATION-WIDE DRIVE ON SLUMS

Capitalizing the present public interest in relief of unemployment and coupling it with slum clearance, the organized building interests of the country are urging the adoption of a nation-wide scheme of aiding employment—presumably in the building trades—by undertaking a wholesale and comprehensive plan for slum clearance.

Last April the American Construction Council—an organization that is interested in all phases of construction activity affected with a public interest—called simultaneous conferences in Chicago and New York of persons likely to be interested to consider the timeliness and desirability of launching a national programme for the rebuilding of slum districts.

Quite recently the President of this organization has sent out to the Governors of all the states and to the Mayors of all cities of 100,000 population and over a letter urging the adoption of comprehensive slum clearance schemes and the rebuilding and modernizing of such districts as a measure affording relief in the present industrial depression.

In this letter the view is expressed that such effort offers one of the greatest potential fields of building construction for the coming decade; that it should furnish many billions of dollars of new construction and, consequently, of employment to many thousands of workers; as well as invaluable social benefits; and that it offers one of the greatest available sources of capital funds, both for ownership and for investment purposes on a limited-dividend basis, and as such can be properly conducted by private enterprise for specific projects in each locality.

With this letter to the Governors is submitted a summary of what they consider the essential steps to be taken in any local plan of slum clearance that may be adopted.

These they have summarized as follows:

1. There should be a comprehensive plan for each community that will permit both the present and future needs of each district in question to be adequately cared for in relation to the community as a whole.
2. To this end, a representative regional planning body should be set up in each locality, with such advisory or mandatory powers as best suits the community according to its local problems and desires.
3. Just what particular area or district should be rebuilt or modernized for housing as distinguished from commercial or industrial purposes should be decided upon in light of such a regional plan as well as the particular type of occupancy or rental classes to be served by the specific project.
4. In rebuilding or modernizing for housing purposes, due consideration must be given to proper basic land values as well as desirable structural design and standards.
5. Adequate facilities for parks, playgrounds, streets, light, air, etc., especially as they influence child life and the public health, must be provided.
6. The type of development of any given district must be carefully designed in relation to traffic and transportation conditions including special attention to the growing problem of congestion and cost of commuter traffic for workers of moderate means.
7. Each particular area to be rebuilt should be large enough to permit of reasonably homogeneous social conditions being developed.
8. It is urgent that there be adequate backing and affirmative aid by the state as well as by municipal and other local governments, including any desirable revision of existing building codes and zoning provisions together with any needed permissive legislation to permit the proper acquisition of the necessary lands with due recognition of property rights.
9. While active and whole-hearted support on the part of municipal, state and other authorities is absolutely essential, the specific projects for rebuilding particular areas, unless they be designed for normal public purposes, should be conducted by private business enterprise on a non-speculative basis.
10. Limited-dividend corporations will probably in most cases best serve the purpose.
11. The actual rebuilding projects should in the main represent local business enterprise for each community, with local capital interested in the projects.
12. The cooperation of appropriate local groups within the construction industry, such as local building congresses and builders' exchanges as well as the individual professions and trades within that industry, and also of related civic and other public-spirited agencies, is essential.
13. A local committee representative of all interests involved—industrial, civic, business and professional—should be immediately created to further the general plan.
14. The formation of new slum or semi-slum districts in metropolitan or outlying areas and the consequent development of new focal points of infection in housing should be prevented as an integral part of any comprehensive programme of slum clearance.

From which it is evident that these representatives of the construction interests realize that the problem is not a simple one, nor one that can be dealt with in haphazard fashion.

We very greatly fear that the results they anticipate will flow from this effort will not come, and that they are destined to be greatly disappointed. For, there are few cities in the United States that are conscious of their slum problem, and even fewer that are willing to do anything about it—even after they have had it called to their attention.

A long campaign of public education we are afraid is inevitable, before effective slum clearance work can be done in this country.

WHAT OF NEW YORK'S SLUMS?

Abolishing the slums in New York is rapidly coming to be the greatest indoor sport. Hardly a day passes when someone does not write to the press urging the abolition of the slums. No one thus far, unfortunately, has suggested any practicable method by which this can be done. That it should be done there can be no question. But it cannot be done by writing letters or by endless discussion. Like every other practical question it must be dealt with in practical fashion.

The City Administration set out to solve New York's housing problem 4 years ago—or was it 5? The problem still remains, however. All kinds of promises were made and there has been a great deal of public discussion of "Mayor Walker's Scheme for Model Tenements." What has happened to it, however, no one is able to find out. It is apparently shrouded in deepest mystery.

The public knows that land on the East Side has been acquired for the purpose, that exorbitant and prohibitive values were set upon their property by some of the property owners affected, that some properties were bought by private sale, and that condemnation proceedings have been instituted with regard to others.

It is common talk that a well known housing architect has been employed to prepare plans, and various reports are current as to the kind of houses which those plans embody. It is also rumored that Mr. Rockefeller is ready to build under certain conditions. But what those conditions are and whether he really is ready to build, no one is able to discover. All attempts to extract information from Mayor Walker on the subject have proved unavailing.

Reciting the history of "Mayor Walker's Housing Scheme," Harold Riegelman, counsel to the legislative commission that drafted the present multiple dwelling law for New York City, challenges the Mayor to produce a practicable and effective plan. He said recently:

The Mayor has not produced a practicable plan for housing on the Chrystie-Forsythe Streets site at \$8 or at \$10 per room per month.

Inexpensive housing at \$12.50 per room per month may be feasible on that site under the state housing law, but probably not otherwise, except with a substantial subsidy. If the Mayor is not temporizing with the crying need for decent housing, let him prove that—however, belatedly—by either making public a workable programme or conferring with the responsible state officials who have, despite the obstacles placed in their path by the City Administration, acted by producing inexpensive housing while the Mayor has wasted two priceless years in making promises he cannot keep.

Answering this criticism of Mayor Walker, Stewart Browne—President of a large property owners' association, including many owners of the older tenements—pointed out that the City has no power either to build or rent houses, and that it has always been obvious to practical men that it was quite out of the question to build houses in that part of the city that could rent for \$8 per month per room.

That Mr. Browne, who for many years has made a close study of real estate and city government in its various aspects, apprehends the elements involved in this situation is evidenced by the following comment made recently by him on this question of slum clearance and better housing.

He said:

No one can buy land in Manhattan and construct housing with all improvements at \$13 per day for labor and double pay for overtime and rent it for \$8 or \$10 per month per room even with 100% tax exemption on land and building.

Cold water housing in fair or good condition can be rented for from \$4 to \$7 per month per room.

Pre-war constructed "walk-up" housing with all improvements and in good condition can be rented for from \$10 to \$12 per month per room.

Pre-war non-fireproof elevator housing in good condition can be rented for from \$15 to \$20 per month per room.

Pre-war fireproof elevator housing in first class condition and with all improvements can be rented for from \$25 to \$50 per month per room.

Post-war "walk-up" housing with all improvements and in A-1 condition can be rented for from \$12 to \$15 per month per room.

Post-war fireproof elevator apartment hotels rent for from \$70 to \$100 per month per room of one or two rooms, with serving pantry and post-war fireproof elevator apartment houses rent for from \$60 per month per room and up.

Furnished rooms can be rented from \$4 to \$7 per week.

No "walk-up" housing should exceed 4 stories in height as it is difficult to rent the 5th story.

No elevator housing of 6 stories or under can be made to pay.

There are only three ways of providing housing with all improvements at rents of \$8 to \$10 per month per room;—

(1) By reconditioning pre-war constructed cold water "walk-up" housing and installing "all improvements"; but even then the rents would require to be at least \$12 per month per room.

(2) By building model towns within 20 miles of New York City along the lines of Welwyn.

(3) By granting Government subsidies such as in Great Britain and Vienna.

The public forget that 50% of New York City's population has 2 or 3 members of the family gainfully employed and that their aggregate earnings run from \$60 to \$75 per week and that they can afford to pay a monthly rent equal to their weekly earnings.

Where there is only one gainfully employed and with a number of dependent children or the physically incapacitated, they can't afford to pay the rents in New York City that "all improvement" new housing demands and they must content themselves with apartments in older buildings with little if any improvements.

An interesting summing up of the various projects that have been advanced for rehabilitating the East Side slum districts, has also been made by Mr. Browne.

Discussing this subject he said recently:

The streets in this district—the area south of East Houston Street to New Chambers Street and east from the Bowery to the East River—are too narrow. The buildings are over 50 years old; mostly cold water 5 and 6 story “walk up tenements”; mostly in dilapidated repair, due largely to the Rent Laws preventing landlords from reconditioning them; largely rented, where rented at all, at pre-war rents. The post-war increased earning power of the tenants has caused most of them to remove to “walk-up” apartments with all improvements in other sections of Greater New York.

The tenants left in occupancy are either slum-minded tenants or those whose earning power prevents them going elsewhere.

In addition to the above, lack of proper transit has completed the demoralization of this district.

In the past four years there have been all sorts of remedies to change this district, such as below:

(1) State Board of Housing and limited dividend companies, which have been a dead failure.

(2) August Hecksher's remedies which resulted in nothing. His intentions were of the best, but were doomed to failure from the start.

(3) Excess condemnation as an incident to street widening. That—“pica-yunish” at best—has resulted in failure.

(4) We have Borough President Miller's plan of \$21 per month per room apartments which doesn't meet the issue at all.

(5) We have Governor Smith's housing corporation which will probably do good work, but to a limited extent and can't possibly change the East Side slum district.

(6) And we have the Regional Plan Committee.

There is only one way to “wipe out” completely the East Side slum district and that is a combination of State and City.

The Police Power of the state is superior to the state constitution. Have the 1931 legislature pass a law empowering either the City or a state created body to condemn this entire slum district and pay not exceeding the 1930 assessed valuation of the properties within such district.

Remove all the tenants and demolish the buildings. Re-street the entire district and make every street not less than 80 feet between the building lines.

Erect new fireproof buildings only, not less than 5 stories with elevators and all improvements. Lots to be 80 feet or so deep with not exceeding 50 or 60 feet deep built upon.

Have the City do all the above or have a state-created body somewhat similar to the Port of New York Authority do it.

The City of New York is spending billions on subways and other public improvements; but not a dollar for housing. Decent housing for workers is much more important than 5 cent transit, schools, public parks, etc., no matter how important the latter may be.

Face the facts. Get the State, the City administration and all the hundred and one housing busy bodies together, pool their issues and get behind one plan to clear out the lower East Side slum district with “one fell swoop”.

Let the rent question alone.

If private enterprise had the power that the state legislature and the City Administration has and had the nerve it could accomplish the above and double its investment in ten years.

At the same time two architects—John Taylor Boyd, Jr. and Arthur C. Holden—have made a Report to their client, the East Side Chamber of Commerce, setting forth their views as to what should happen to the East Side. In their Report they attempt to forecast the

future of that part of the city and to predict what will happen to it and what should happen to it. Their Report raises a number of vital and interesting questions, such as these

(1) Shall the Lower East Side be reserved almost entirely for (a) future business development or (b) mainly a residence area with certain sections devoted to commercial, business and light industrial uses?

(2) Shall the East River front be given over entirely to (a) dockage and to a vehicular traffic artery or express highway or (b) shall it be in part devoted to a park and residence development? On the answer to these points depends largely both the nature and value of the reconstruction of the Lower East Side.

They believe that a high type of residence development is indicated for this section of the city—of as high a standard as is consistent with the potential value of the land in the various sections—and that new and adequate zoning of the district is essential in order to protect builders against undesirable uses, pointing out that at present the district is zoned almost entirely either for “unrestricted” or for business use. Those responsible for zoning New York City in 1916—as is well known—simply passed up the job of zoning the lower East Side.

Messrs. Boyd and Holden, estimate that the replacement of all the buildings on the lower East Side—nearly all of them obsolete, old-law tenements from 30 to 40 years of age—would bring added values in both land and buildings of $\frac{1}{2}$ to $\frac{3}{4}$ of a billion dollars, possibly even more, and that the additional tax income to the city accruing from this huge increase in values would be from 12 to 15 or more millions of dollars annually.

That the rehabilitation of the East Side need not necessarily wait upon the adoption of vast, comprehensive schemes of slum clearance, or of municipal housing, is evidenced by the work that is quietly and steadily proceeding on the part of landlords and building operators in that section of the city.

According to Joseph Platzker, Secretary of the East Side Chamber of Commerce, many property owners there are taking advantage of the depression in the building and allied trades and the reduced costs that have resulted therefrom, to make extensive renovations and alterations in the old-law tenement houses of which they are the owners. He states that it is conservatively estimated that \$410,000 has been invested this year for improved housing equipment on the lower East Side. According to a survey made by him, he finds that owners of 19 houses are spending \$369,000 in improvements, attracting tenants

with bigger buying and spending power. He adds that most dwellers in cold-water flats have paid \$4 to \$7 a room a month; but that new tenants with the new improvements are now paying \$12 to \$15 a room.

He cites the case of one landlord who is investing \$100,000 in improving three houses on Catherine Street, two on Oak Street, and two on Roosevelt Street, where they will even have a garbage incinerator. All of these houses will have paneled walls, steam heat, new electric equipment and tiled bathrooms. As indicative that people, even in that part of the city, are willing to pay for improved conditions of living, he cites the fact that flats in the Catherine Street houses, which formerly rented for \$25 per apartment now bring in \$70 for an apartment of 5 rooms, notwithstanding the fact that these houses are at least 50 years old. Flats in Roosevelt and Oak Streets of 4 rooms, which formerly rented for \$20 now rent at \$50. Other owners of tenements in other parts of the district are making similar renovations. He adds that it is expected that current improvements will make available 235 apartments for new occupancy.

In addition to this modernizing of the older houses, a progressive builder on the East Side is also building a new apartment house in Stanton Street, bringing down to the lower East Side some of the latest devices and "gadgets" that have proved so popular up-town. This new building, located on Stanton Street between Attorney and Ridge Streets, on a lot 100 by 100 feet in area, is expected to be ready for occupancy early in the year and will contain 44 apartments. All the apartments had been leased for a two-year period on October 1st last. More than 50% of the tenants now reside in the Bronx or Brooklyn and are being attracted back to the lower East Side by these improved facilities of living.

The rent for the new building will average \$12.50 per room per month. The building will have a modernistic lobby, a self-service elevator, mechanical refrigeration, black and white tiled bathrooms, 6 foot showers, large foyers in all apartments, and kitchens with breakfast nooks. Garbage incinerators will be provided. The living rooms in this new building average 12 by 18 feet in size, and some are as large as 12 by 20. The bedrooms average 10 by 15 feet and dining rooms 13 by 16 feet. Although not cooperative, it is evident that this venture has been very much influenced by the new Grand Street tenements described on the following page. This new apartment has also been sponsored by the State Housing Board and has been developed under the limited dividend plan.

From all of which it would seem that the East Side is still very much alive.

NEW YORK'S LATEST MODEL TENEMENTS

The newest group of "Garden Apartments" to be opened in New York are the buildings occupying two entire city blocks on New York's lower East Side, way over almost to the East River on the site for many years occupied by the Hoe printing press plant.

This unusually advantageous site was acquired about a year ago by two of New York's public-spirited citizens—Aaron Rabinowitz, a member of the State Housing Board and a leading realtor of New York City, and Lieutenant Governor Herbert H. Lehman—with the purpose of erecting on it model apartments to be rented at the lowest possible rent consistent with a return on the money invested under the limited dividend scheme, and affording the highest standards of living that have thus far been furnished to an industrial population in New York City.

These 6-story elevator apartments occupy about 50% of the lot and house 231 families in 3-room, 4-room, and 5-room apartments. The apartments are grouped around a great central garden 12,000 square feet in area, planted with shrubbery and flowers and adorned with fountains. In addition to the central garden there are 6 outer courts with a combined area of about 9,000 square feet.

The buildings are a true co-operative enterprise. No one can live in them who is not an owner of his apartment, and no one can own an apartment who does not live in the building. In order to acquire an apartment it is necessary for the tenant to pay approximately \$500 per room as down-payment on the ultimate purchase of the apartment, which will be paid off in a period of years.

A payment of \$1500 to \$2,000 for each family occupying 3 and 4-room apartments is an amount of capital beyond the reach of most wage earners in that part of the city. In order to meet this difficulty and to enable families with small capital to live in these fine new dwellings and to participate in their co-operative ownership, Mr. Lehman and Mr. Rabinowitz have advanced the necessary capital to the tenant-owners with the result that the minimum cash payment required in order to secure participation in ownership has been reduced from \$1500 to about \$540 for a 3-room apartment.

The method of financing thus seems to be on all fours with the methods employed in the earlier project of the Amalgamated Housing Corporation, in its buildings on the edge of Van Cortland Park in the Bronx. These new East Side buildings have been built and organized by this same Amalgamated Housing Corporation, of which Mr. Rabino-

witz is an active member and A. Kazan is President; and the same firm of architects, Springsteen and Goldhammer, who did such excellent work in the Bronx group of buildings have been employed in this instance as well.

Each tenant under the scheme employed pays for his apartment on the installment plan and ultimately becomes the owner of it. These payments—which may be considered as the equivalent of a monthly rental—average about \$12.50 per room per month, the maximum amount permitted under the state housing law. Some suites rent for as low as \$10 a room per month. The total cost of this group of buildings has been \$1,500,000. Under the state law the building, as distinguished from the land, is exempt from local taxation for a period of 20 years, and the whole project both land and building is entirely exempt from all state taxes, both mortgage tax and income tax—a very substantial consideration.

Every convenience of living that could be provided in a modern apartment house has been provided in these buildings, intended for occupancy by wage earners earning a comparatively modest wage. While the buildings are 6 stories high no one has to climb to his apartment, for they are provided with a number of automatic push-button elevators, which have been made as near fool-proof as possible. In addition to automatic elevators all apartments are supplied with electric lights, steam heat, hot and cold water, modern bath rooms, hardwood floors, and garbage incinerators accessible on each floor.

Building materials and equipment similar to that used in exclusive residential structures throughout Manhattan have been used in this new East Side apartment. All materials used have been of high quality and are substantial, as the building has been built as an investment and is intended to last. Copper flashings are used in place of lead, the bath rooms are of tile, door frames are of metal; and in general the whole equipment and character of the building represents a very high standard.

There are 14 stores on the ground floor on the Grand Street side, a thoroughfare where stores are likely to be very much in demand. Underneath these stores with an entrance from the court there is an auditorium with a capacity of seating 300 persons, to be used by the tenant owners for entertainments and meetings. There is also a baby-carriage garage in the basement with space for 300 carriages and a ramp leading from it to the court. Two sections of the roof-garden give 10,000 square feet of roof space and the electric elevators extend to the roof. In the hot summer months this roof-garden, located as it

is overlooking the East River with its cooling breezes, should prove a Godsend to the tenants.

The keenest interest has been shown by residents of the neighborhood who have lived in old-law, cold-water flats, with few modern conveniences and with little light and air for many years. Hundreds of them—chiefly women—visit the new buildings each day and several thousand have inspected the model flat furnished by one of the great department stores.

The rooms are of a generous size—the living rooms, indeed, being even as large as 12 feet by 18 feet in area. The kitchens too are large—no tiny kitchenettes in these buildings. One aged woman, who had moved in from her former flat in East Broadway had the following to say with regard to the new buildings:

“This is what we have wanted all along. This steam heat, and ice, and all the hot water we need are things we didn’t have on East Broadway. We must get a little new furniture to suit the place. It’s so quiet and nice here, too, on the court—not like the other street. That roof will be a nice place for me in Summer, too, because I am too old to get out in the country. Will we keep it tidy? Look!” She pointed to the bright pans in the kitchen and the freshly swept floors.

“I never had any light or much air in my other place,” said another woman tenant who came from Rivington Street. “There it was dark and sad. Here it is bright, and I am glad.”

The first tenants are learning rapidly to make proper use of their new quarters, and already are beginning to show a pride of ownership and an interest in the example of cleanliness set by some of their more orderly neighbors, the managers of the building report.

Those sponsoring this scheme and the officials of the State Board of Housing who have had much to do with the development of this latest model tenement believe that having thus shown the way there is no reason why the whole East Side may not be gradually rebuilt with similar buildings—a consummation devoutly to be wished!

MORE GARDEN APARTMENTS FOR BROOKLYN

The second group of model apartment houses to be erected by the Brooklyn Garden Apartments, Inc., were completed recently. They consist of 111 three and four-room apartments and are located at 100-8 Adelphi Street, near Myrtle Avenue, between City and Fort Greene Parks, but 12 minutes from City Hall by the Myrtle Avenue “L” lines.

The apartments, fully occupied and with a long waiting list, are rented at an average of \$11 a room, according to location, and each tenant is required to subscribe for one share of stock, of which at least a

half must be paid as deposit on reservation. The total cost of the project is close to \$426,000, of which \$235,000 has been provided by the Metropolitan Life Insurance Company on mortgage at 5%; \$180,000 by stock subscription; and \$11,000 by tenants' subscriptions to shares limited to a 6% return.

The buildings are entirely free of local taxation for 20 years and are free of *all* state taxes, including mortgage and income taxes for all time.

This indirect subsidy by City and State is so substantial according to Walter Kruesi, Secretary and Director of the Company, that it will more than amortize the mortgage of \$235,000.

The apartments in this group of 5-story buildings are oil-heated, and equipped with incinerators at each floor. The seven entrances are from the Gardens and by arcades to Adelphi Street and Carlton Avenue.

The first project of Brooklyn Garden Apartments, Inc., at 4th Avenue and 23rd and 24th Streets, was completed on August 1, 1929, and has maintained an average over 97% rented ever since. The audit just completed shows that it has earned over 6½% on the capital stock employed, after charges, expenses and reserves for depreciation and superannuation. It was the first apartment house in Brooklyn to be initiated under the state housing act.

The new building embodies several improvements over the 4th Avenue structure, such as more and larger closets, finer floors, more handsome bathroom appurtenances, and cross ventilation.

MODEL TENANTS FOR MODEL TENEMENTS

As "there aint no sich animal" as a "model tenant", managers of model housing enterprises have that age-long problem of dealing with poor human nature as they find it. So it is not surprising to find one of the most recent of these movements, the Brooklyn Garden Apartments, adopting a series of "Tenant Regulations" in order to ensure the well-being of the occupants of their dwellings.

As these have a number of novel features, such as forbidding the keeping of dogs, or the playing of music, "canned" or otherwise, after 11 p. m. or before 7 a. m., we give them in full.

RULES AND REGULATIONS

BROOKLYN GARDEN APARTMENTS

1. The premises may be inspected by the Agent or his representative at all reasonable hours.
2. Children will not be allowed to play in the halls, on the steps or in the garden. A Playground is provided for their use.
3. The parking of baby carriages, go-carts, bicycles, etc., in the halls is strictly prohibited. This is a violation of the Tenement House law and the Fire Department. They may be kept within the apartment, or placed at the tenant's risk in a room set aside for this purpose.
4. No dogs or other animals will be allowed in or about the premises.
5. No bedclothes, rugs, mops or dust cloths are to be shaken or hung out of the windows. Bottles, boxes, flower-pots, etc., are not to be placed on window sills or fire escapes. Nothing must be thrown out of windows.
6. Landings and fire escapes must be kept free from all obstructions by order of the Tenement House and Fire Departments.
7. No furniture will be stored in basement. A room is provided for trunks where they may be stored at the tenant's risk.
8. Music will not be allowed between 11 o'clock p. m. and 7 a. m. As many of the bedrooms face the garden, it is essential that there be no loud talking, slamming of doors or disturbance of any kind in the entrances and garden after 11 p. m. Tenants are expected at all times to so conduct themselves as not to infringe on the peace and comfort of others.
9. Signs of any kind must not be displayed in windows. The premises are let solely for residence purposes.
10. Tenants will have to replace broken window-glass, electric fuses and shades at their own expense.
11. Running wires, exposed across ceilings, down walls or at base moldings for floor lamps, table lamps, etc., is absolutely prohibited, as this is a violation of the Building Code.
12. No alterations, cutting of doors for extra locks or painting permitted unless approved by the Office.
13. AERIALS: Tenants are urged to use inside aerials when possible, but for the benefit of those whose radios cannot be operated without outside assistance, an aerial will be provided along the coping of the roof on the inside of the garden and courts. Consult the Superintendent as to your connection.
14. No one will be allowed on the roof at any time except for the purpose of hanging clothes. Each tenant should supply his own line, removing it when taking down clothes.
15. The tenant shall take good care of the premises and fixtures. He shall make good the cost of any injury or breakage, or damage caused by the overflow or escape of water, steam, electricity or gas, or otherwise, whether accidentally or intentionally brought about by himself or through his negligence or that of his family, employees or visitors.
16. Every tenant must give one month's notice in writing of intention to vacate apartment.
17. No tenant will be permitted to move from one apartment to another unless such arrangement is made with the Office at the time of rental.
18. For the protection of the building and the tenants the Management provides a bonded Exterminating Company whose representative will visit the apartments every other week on a specified day. Each tenant is requested to admit the man, who will be in uniform, and if it should be impossible to do so, leave word at the Office in order that the Superintendent may admit him if necessary.

Notwithstanding what to many may seem a rather strict control of their habits of living, the building is not only fully occupied, but there is a long waiting list of persons anxious and eager to get in.

WORK STARTED ON NEW PHIPPS APARTMENTS AT SUNNYSIDE GARDENS

In our last issue we referred to the new model Garden apartments to be erected by the Society of Phipps Houses at Sunnyside Gardens, Queens, for the accommodation of workers with moderate incomes. Work on the excavation for these buildings has recently been started. The building will be 460 by 260 feet and will occupy 2 city blocks.

A special feature will be the extensiveness of the inner Garden-court, which will cover nearly 2 acres and will be about the size of Gramercy Park in New York City. This unusually large Garden court has been planned by Phipps Houses with a view to admitting plenty of sunshine into every apartment in the building and also providing city workers with the peace and privacy of a real country outlook.

There will be 344 apartments, half of them 6-story elevator apartments and the other half 4-story walk-ups. All will have mechanical refrigeration and incinerators. In size the apartments will range from 1½ rooms to 5 rooms. A number are to have porches, and there will be many small apartments to fill the needs of business men and women who have either small families or none at all.

The plans of the apartments have been developed in cooperation with the City Housing Corporation, owners of Sunnyside Gardens, and will conform with the general character of the community, where houses of medium height and attractive design are the rule.

HOMES FOR NEW YORK'S WHITE-COLLAR WORKERS

Last May, the Borough President of Manhattan, Julius Miller, in an attempt to stem the exodus from that Borough—just why it is so terrible a thing for a population to be distributed out into the other boroughs or into the suburbs is never quite understood, except by politicians—invited 25 of the city's leading builders to undertake the building of apartment houses to house the so-called "white-collar" classes on Manhattan Island in its mid-town section.

It was announced at the time that the Borough President had secured a pledge from each of these 25 builders to begin within a year the construction in Manhattan of an apartment building on a lot 100 by 100 feet, with 7 apartments of varying size on each floor. These buildings were to be from 6 to 11 stories high, and the average rent was not to exceed \$21 a room a month. In announcing this plan, Mr. Miller explained that it was devised to solve the acute problem created

in Manhattan by the continued erection of business buildings, accompanied by a steady decrease in the resident working population who are forced to seek living quarters in other boroughs.

At the time of this announcement the names of these 25 leading building firms were given out with the definite assurance that each one of them would build an apartment house of the type mentioned during the coming year. Low priced money was arranged for, the Metropolitan Life Insurance Company having stated that it would make permanent loans for periods of 10 to 20 years on such buildings at the rate of 5½% for the first 10-year period and 5% thereafter. After joint study, three firms of architects evolved a form of apartment house offering the advantages of modern construction with the possibility of reasonable rents.

Apparently, some hitch developed in this programme or sober second thought indicated the necessity for further study of the practical problems involved. For, recently—nearly 6 months later—a Report was given out by the Borough President on behalf of a special Committee appointed by the 25 leading builders to report upon the feasibility of the project.

After a 6-months close study of the subject by eminently practical men—including among their number such well known builders as Alexander M. Bing, G. Richard Davis and others—the Committee reported that they found that under proper conditions the construction of buildings such as had been proposed was feasible on Manhattan Island with rentals for the first 6 floors of a 12 story apartment averaging about \$22 a month per room.

The Committee in its Report states that, while it is difficult to find suitable property in suitable locations in Manhattan sufficiently reasonably priced for such purpose, still there is a sufficient amount of such property that can be found and that has been found after diligent search. They point out, however, that the cost of land on Manhattan Island today is too great to permit a 5-story or 6-story nonfireproof walk-up apartment house, and that it therefore necessary to build a fireproof building preferably one 12 stories high, so as to make the project an economic success and keep the rent at the figure desired.

On the question of the cost of the land, what the Committee has to say is of considerable interest. It reports that it has examined all the low-priced land offered and in its opinion finds it unsuitable for improvement for housing of the character desired, because the locations in which this land is obtainable are entirely unsuited for the type of tenants contemplated.

The Committee adds:

If the City or State were able to acquire an entire area in the so-called slum districts with a suitable approach, it would probably be possible to utilize cheap land, i. e., from \$5 to \$10 a square foot.

The Committee, however, did not think this practicable or probable, but believes that the plan advocated by President Miller can be best carried out by utilizing available property in locations suitable for immediate development where schools, transit, and surroundings make living conditions desirable.

NO CHILDREN FOR THESE PEOPLE

The Committee has examined many plans submitted to it by various architects and reports upon two alternative plans. From the description given in the Committee's Report of the types of apartments developed, it is evident that the white-collar worker in Manhattan in future will have to deny himself the luxury of children; for, all of these apartments are of the concentrated type. One of the plans contains no apartment larger than 3 rooms—that is, no apartment with more than one bedroom. Moreover, in this plan the bathrooms are nearly all interior bathrooms to be ventilated—if at all—by ducts and fans, involving an extra cost in both installation and upkeep.

The Committee points out that there must be a reduction in the size of rooms if the plan is to succeed, adding that they have come to the conclusion that the size of the rooms must be large enough to meet modern day requirements but small enough to enable a sufficient number of rooms in each building unit to keep the rental per room within reasonable limits.

Their conclusions are that it is possible to build 12-story apartment houses for white-collar workers in Manhattan in a central location at rentals that average about \$22 a month per room, in apartments that do not contain more than a single bedroom. These conclusions are based upon netting 10% on the equity invested and 7% on the entire operation with an estimated gross return of about 16% on the investment.

What the outcome of this effort will be is undisclosed at the time of writing this article.

A CHILD'S TOWN—RADBURN

Radburn—that new garden community being developed by the City Housing Corporation under the leadership of Alexander M. Bing—is growing by leaps and bounds. On October 1st, its population had

increased by 107% over what it was at the first of the year, there being 288 families living in Radburn on the later date as compared with 137 families nine months earlier.

The present population of Radburn is 830, an increase of 430 people, and still they come; 17 new families will move in before the end of the year, adding 57 people to the total population, and 18 new children will find their place among those happy, healthy, growing youngsters who now call Radburn "home".

Radburn is very aptly described by its developers as "a child's town" when out of its population of 830 people, 220 are children—111 girls and 109 boys—or nearly 27% of the total population. Of these children most of them are quite young, just 26 being over 10 years of age. In fact the children are so young that it has not been possible as yet to establish boy scouts and girl scouts troops—but that is only a matter of a short time.

There has been much going on at Radburn during the past few months that has distinct interest for our readers. Recreation has naturally been developed to a very large extent. In addition to croquet, horseshoe pitching, cricket and archery, a baseball team has been organized, playing match games on Saturdays and Sunday afternoons on a nearby field, and playground baseball for boys was held every afternoon on a lawn near the swimming pool. Nor has this form of activity been confined solely to children; for, groups of men have been noticed having a game of catch ball or a father playing baseball with his boys after a day at the office.

The unique feature of Radburn's recreational work is not so much that there is a large variety of sports and games, but that all of these activities are carried on within short walking distance of the home, and not at some distant point—as is the case in most other towns.

The swimming enthusiasts—and they seem to include almost everybody at Radburn—walk to the swimming pool from their homes along interior parks without setting foot on the public highway. Tennis is one of the most popular of the sports. In addition, a sloping lawn in one of the parks and a semi-circle of trees have made a natural outdoor theatre where 70 children participated in a Labor Day Pageant.

The most successful feature of Radburn, however, has been the new swimming pool—inaugurated on May 31st last. Between that time and October 1st, a period of 4 months, the pool was used by over 27,000 people. Located near the children's playground and reached along the park walks and thus without danger of encountering automobiles en route, mothers have not hesitated to allow even the very

smallest children to go to sunbathe and swim at the pool. It is interesting to note that of the 154 children between the ages of 3 and 4 years in Radburn, approximately 50 could swim on May 30th last; by September 1st, 128 children could swim. In addition to this instruction of children, many adults who had not learned to swim when they were young were taught swimming and diving by the guards. Water polo has become a favorite sport and swimming and diving contests are held.

So successful has this first swimming pool been that the construction of a second one slightly larger is now under way in the new section being developed.

This steady growth at Radburn seems as if it might temporarily be checked. Owing to the unemployment situation, and the general hard times, it is very difficult to get capital for the further development of Radburn at this moment—and a community like Radburn simply devours capital.

Notwithstanding these difficulties, we are convinced that Mr. Bing with his marvelous enthusiasm and ability for getting things done will weather the storm and find capital from some new source, so that this important development will not be checked.

PHILADELPHIA WORKERS WILL NOT LIVE IN TENEMENTS

Although there has been an increase every year for the past 5 years in the percentage of new family-accommodations of the apartment type provided in Philadelphia, many of these buildings are not making adequate returns on the investment. Practically all of them have been built for the white collar group. The impression seems to prevail that the working man is better housed—and at lower rentals—in the thousands of single-family dwellings in both the old and new areas. This impression is borne out by the fact that over a long period of years only a very small number of multiple type dwellings have been constructed for occupancy by the lower income groups.

It is true that many working men are living in tenements that have been converted from single-family dwellings, but even this becomes an insignificant percentage compared with the thousands living in one-family homes.

The isolated cases of tenement construction for the working man have been uniformly unsuccessful in their income yield, with the result that business men and mortgage investors have shown little disposition toward this form of speculation.

The records of the Octavia Hill Association, which has been owning and managing properties on a limited-dividend basis for a num-

ber of years—disclose two buildings that are outstanding examples of this attitude against tenement living.

One of these buildings, the *Casa Ravella*, is located in the heart of the Italian District and caters to Italian tenants. This 4-story brick building of fireproof construction was erected in 1902 by Dr. George Woodward—a Philadelphia philanthropist—and later turned over to the Octavia Hill Association for management. It includes 30 apartments and 6 stores. Three of the apartments are of 4 rooms and the remaining 27 are of 2 rooms each. The rents—which include electricity and vary with the size of the rooms and the number of stories from the ground—range from \$7 per room per month in the 2-room apartments on the second floor to \$4 per room per month in the 4-room apartment on the fourth floor. Gas and a kitchen sink are provided, but the tenant must procure his own stove and heater. All of the accommodations have toilet facilities either within the apartment or in the fire tower. A few have shower baths and the 4-room apartments have complete bathroom equipment.

However, in spite of the conveniences and the fact that the rents compare favorably with the single-family dwellings in the neighborhood, this building shows 23.3% vacancy at the present time. Considering operation costs and the normal percentage that is set aside for depreciation, the building is being maintained at a loss.

The second unsatisfactory tenement house experience on the records of the Octavia Hill Association occurred in connection with a Negro tenement. This building—originally erected to provide furnished accommodations for transients in Philadelphia during the Sesquicentennial in 1926—was later converted to Negro occupancy, due to the fact that it is situated in a Negro district. The apartments were of 4 and 5 rooms each, and were intended to rent at \$9 per room per month. More than 50% vacancy prevailed in this 12-family tenement throughout the period of Association management, and this in spite of the fact that the facilities offered—which included electricity, gas, complete kitchen equipment and one toilet accommodation for each two apartments—are superior to average living conditions in the neighborhood. This low rate of occupancy automatically precludes profit.

The consensus of opinion has been that desirable Negro tenants prefer single-family dwellings.

BERNARD J. NEWMAN
Philadelphia

HOUSING FORGOTTEN IN PHILADELPHIA'S CITY PLAN REPORT

The First Report of the Philadelphia City Planning Commission which was appointed nearly two years ago has just been presented. This Report—based on the work of M. Jacques Gréber, French planning expert who is well known in Philadelphia for his participation in the plan of the Parkway—has been long awaited. One of its most important aspects is the long-term view that has been taken; for, while Philadelphia's development for the next 50 years, undoubtedly, will not be in accordance with the suggestions and plans set forth, yet it is encouraging to realize that here is a general outline that will provide an intelligent basis for some worthwhile improvements.

The approaches to the Delaware River and University Bridges have been given first place in consideration; and elaborate plans for underpasses, rotaries, and diagonal streets have been suggested. Similarly, transit facilities to West Philadelphia and the proposed Schuylkill River Boulevards, à la Paris, have been stressed. Unfortunately, there has been little attention paid to slum clearance or to the reclamation of blighted areas with the exception of a passing mention of the possibilities of enhancing taxable values east of Tenth Street through the widening of certain streets to serve industrial and commercial districts.

It appears that the City Planning Commission is chiefly interested in facilitating traffic movements between the central business section and the outlying residential sections, and ignores the large potential residential areas in the central part of the city which now constitute undesirable slums.

It should be remarked in passing that the City Planning Commission—which has been hampered in its work through lack of funds ever since its creation nearly two years ago—is at last receiving a place in the city budget. Under present plans the technical planning work of the Commission will be assigned to the Department of Architecture of the city government. At the same time, provision is being made to increase the personnel of that department.

BERNARD J. NEWMAN
Philadelphia

GOOD HOMES FOR NEGROES IN CHICAGO

The Michigan Boulevard Garden Apartments of Chicago represent the realization of an idea conceived by Julius Rosenwald. They are the first practical experiment made on a large scale to improve housing conditions for the Negroes of that city.

A report at the end of the first 6 months of 1930 showed an occupancy of approximately 98%, while the net income for this 6-months period was at an annual rate of about 6% on the capital stock, depreciation and all other items of expense having been charged into the operation and cost of the building.

Mr. Rosenwald in commenting on this, and on the fact that bad debts over the period were only $\frac{1}{8}$ of 1%, said recently:

It is now a little more than a year since the completion of the Apartments and I would like to record the feeling of satisfaction which is mine, due to the splendid results of our great venture. By results I do not have in mind primarily the financial side—important and desirable as that is—but more particularly the fine type of tenants which fill the buildings. So far as I have learned, there has been little or no friction between the tenants and the management or among the tenants themselves. This is highly gratifying, and I think great credit is due to the effectiveness of the Community Association and the Board of Advisors, who represent the tenants.

Those living in our Apartments have proven that the Negro is a law abiding citizen and a desirable tenant. In so doing they have added to the prestige of their race and have tended to encourage the investment of money in kindred projects, since it is known that such property is likely to receive the sort of treatment that might be expected from the best class of people, regardless of race. I have been especially impressed with the quiet that prevailed in the court—an indication that those who occupy the building must respect one another's rights.

Therefore, I take this opportunity to express my gratification concerning the first year's operation, and the assurance of my appreciation for all that has been done to prove that my faith in the Negro is justified.

The Michigan Boulevard Garden Apartments, occupied entirely by Negroes, consists of 421 apartments of 3, 4 and 5 rooms, representing an investment of \$2,700,000. The building occupies less than 40% of the land, the remainder being laid out in beautiful gardens, courts and a playground for small children. Two nursery schools are run in connection with it, one for the children of the mothers who work and must be gone all day, and the other, for children whose mothers are at home. The building personnel, including the manager, is made up of Negroes.

The apartments are a great deal more than a group of well designed and well managed buildings. They constitute almost a little city in

itself with highly developed community activities, making for the development of a neighborly spirit and providing convenient educational and recreational facilities for children.

Tenants in the Michigan Boulevard Garden Apartments automatically are members of the Co-operative Community Association. The Building is divided into 11 units of 3 stairways each; each unit elects from its number a chairman who represents the members of the group on a Board of Advisors. This Board meets periodically with the Management to discuss proposed improvements and community activities. Mutual understanding is thus established between the tenants and the management and individual complaints are being reduced through suggestions from tenants' representatives to those in charge.

One of the outstanding activities for adults is the Sunday afternoon Forum bringing interesting speakers to the community. Subjects of widespread concern are discussed under leadership of well-informed men and women.

There are men's clubs and women's clubs; chief among them the Men's Athletic Club for men desiring participation in active sports; and the Women's Club for all women interested in service to the community, in educational programmes, and in social activities.

The Recreation Department answers the play needs of children of school age by providing outdoor playground activities, such as active games and sports, and indoor playroom activities, such as handicraft, art work and library facilities. This programme, which is carried on under the supervision of a recreation director affords the children wholesome association and normal recreation.

Working with the recreation department whose programme is designed for boys and girls there are the Girl Scout and Boy Scout organizations which offer many and varied opportunities for character building and recreation combined.

The Nursery Schools represent the most modern and approved methods of training the child of pre-school age in desirable living habits. They make available to parents advice concerning the handling of behavior problems through individual conferences with the teachers, through parents' meetings, and through selected reading material that can be borrowed from their libraries. This service is rendered to all parents.

As a means of keeping the residents informed of what is going on, a bulletin known as "Garden News" is issued from time to time.

HOUSING EFFORT IN PITTSBURGH

The first annual report on housing in Pittsburgh, coming as it does a year and a half after the founding of the Pittsburgh Housing Association, gives a valuable record of accomplishment in view of the short period of activity.

The Report shows that the method of approach of the Association, under the leadership of John Ihlder, is intrinsically sound in that it is based on studies of prevalent conditions.

The Pittsburgh Association began operations by asking itself "What kind of effort in the housing field does Pittsburgh most need today?" An inspection service was initiated which combined a triple purpose:

- First, to obtain the necessary information to answer this question;
- Second, to seek the correction of those unsafe and insanitary conditions which are amenable to law;
- Third, to determine the need for added regulation, or for increased efficiency in the law enforcement division of the municipal government.

The Association has sought the assistance of social and health agencies in locating housing defects in dwellings and has made periodic reinspections of these properties. In this way, a volume of information has been obtained which shows that disrepair, inadequate water supply, vacant and open houses, dark rooms, overcrowded rooms, privy vaults, and other unsafe and nuisance conditions are prevalent in Pittsburgh as in other large American cities.

The Association announces the finding of a "considerable number of vacant houses" which due to vandalism not only "give the city a bedraggled look" but "become a social, a health, and a fire menace". Police supervision was requested and obtained for such houses, but this is a doubtful method of control due to the tendency to relax such supervision. Because new housing costs place such dwellings "beyond the means of that part of the population whose need is greatest" and because of the large number of vacancies, the Association has become convinced that a major emphasis in their programme must be placed on "the repair and reconditioning of existing houses", and the inauguration of a programme which "will result in getting rid of the worst housing, improving the remainder, securing open spaces".

Apparently recognizing that artificial boundary lines do not segregate bad housing to a particular area, the Association has instituted an extensive service to other municipalities in Allegheny County, adjacent to Pittsburgh.

A very practical phase of the programme of the Pittsburgh Housing Association is in the education of the public. This it does through

special committees created from time to time to deal with specific questions that arise, as well as through printed leaflets and lectures, and particularly through a four-reel moving picture dealing with housing conditions in Pittsburgh.

BERNARD J. NEWMAN
Philadelphia

DEMOLISH UNSAFE DWELLINGS

Unsafe and unfit dwellings are a community liability. They are a constant drag on the constructive efforts of social and health agencies. When vacant and open—as many now are—they become a menace to their neighborhoods. They are harbors for tramps and vagrants. They often contain filth and are misused as comfort stations, so menacing the public health. They depress neighboring property values. They give the city an unkempt and disreputable appearance belying its true character.

The Pittsburgh Housing Association believes that unsafe dwellings should be made safe or should be demolished, and that demolishing them will help to relieve unemployment. House owners, builders, realtors, all who are interested in housing might profit by watching what the automobile interests are doing. But there is one great difference between the two groups. The automobile men have facts, those interested in dwelling house property have guesses and estimates. We do not know how many unsafe and unfit dwellings there are in Pittsburgh. Occasionally one of them surprises us by falling down. In housing we have nothing comparable to the annual inspection of automobiles. If we had, there would be a great deal of work started right now, and by next spring Pittsburgh would be a much more attractive city as well as one freed of many hazards to life and health.

The Bureau of Building Inspection is the agency created to deal with unsafe buildings. During the present year it has been more active than in the past. Last year it was more active than for several years preceding. A report by Verne C. Wright, published in 1927, says, "The worker in charge of razing houses says that not more than half a dozen have been razed by the Bureau in the last three years." The Housing Association during its regular inspection work noted that 32 were razed in 1929 and 54 up to October 1, 1930. Only a small portion of these were in the "Strip" and the Monument Hill areas. In those districts many houses have been razed, not because they were unsafe, but because they stood in the way of progress. These are not counted.

The Housing Association took up demolition immediately after its organization in October, 1928. In 1929 it submitted to the Bureau two lists of dwellings that it believed should be demolished or made safe. In 1930 it has submitted other lists. Forty-one (41) of these dwellings have been razed. At the present time, 41 dwellings listed with the Bureau for demolition have not yet been razed.

The Association believes that the small number of demolitions is due partly to the fact that the Bureau issues no public reports. Public reports ceased in 1916. During the preceding years when reports were issued the Bureau was much more active. In 1914, 293 unfit dwellings were razed; in 1915, 283; in 1916, 286. Moreover, Pittsburgh today is not as active in this work as are other cities. Milwaukee in 1928 demolished 400 old buildings unfit for human habitation and in 1929, 261. In the office of the Philadelphia Housing Association is a map of Philadelphia showing in graphic form the demolition of dwellings in the years 1923-27. The dots in the older section of the city are so numerous that they cover whole wards.

Housing progress, municipal progress, progress in almost any field of life consists in discarding what is worn-out, useless, detrimental and substituting that which meets our present needs. Retaining useless junk, whether in an attic or on a building lot involves needless care and expense. So it is extravagant.

It is often said that what Pittsburgh needs is a series of fires. This is the thought of men who see the handicap our obsolete buildings present but are hopeless as to intelligent action. Fire is not intelligent; it takes the good with the bad. It interferes with continuing business and so causes larger losses than those due to its destruction. Yet other cities than Chicago have had reason to set aside the date of a conflagration as a civic holiday.

Pittsburgh today can do intelligently what a conflagration would do unintelligently. Demolition of unsafe and unfit dwellings would relieve their owners of taxes, and would increase neighboring values. If these dwellings were cleared away it would become evident that we have many sites conveniently located for new buildings. And clearing them away would give employment, raise property values, and make Pittsburgh a more attractive city.

JOHN IHLDER
Executive Director Pittsburgh Housing Association

UNEMPLOYMENT AND HOUSING

That unemployment has a very definite relation to Housing is made plain by a statement recently issued by the Pittsburgh Housing Association. They point out that

Men without jobs—and consequently without wages—can not pay rent. If rent is not paid, some landlords let their property run down. Admitting the unwisdom of such landlords, we must also admit that some landlords are unwise. They throw away capital value along with revenue. Of course there are some landlords who have no reserves, who are land-poor or house-poor and so are unable to keep up the value of their investment if the current revenue from it stops. For these reasons the Association is very definitely interested in the unemployment situation.

The Pittsburgh Housing Association thoroughly agrees with the statement of policy adopted by the Federation of Social Agencies that the way to deal with unemployment is by providing work at standard wages, not by doling out relief. For, relief, while necessary, can not meet the need. When City Council cut \$200,000 from the street cleaning appropriation and threw 400 men—half the street cleaning force—out of work, it added to the problem more than it is helping by appropriating \$100,000 for relief. It should continue to provide the work and pay the wages required for proper municipal services and then *add* relief—not use it as a partial substitute. The emergency construction work that may give employment to a considerable number of men also should be considered as an addition to regular municipal services—not as a substitute.

The Housing Association states that no matter what the business conditions, there always are excuses for leaving undone needed things that do not bring an immediate profit. If business is brisk, if every dwelling is occupied, if all good workers are steadily employed, the short-sighted landlord declines to make repairs, because he can get tenants anyhow. If times are dull he pleads lack of means. The only answer is that standards must be maintained.

It points out that

Maintenance of good housing standards will give additional employment. Additional employment means increased purchasing power. And that is what we need. The depression will end sometime. But if everyone postpones work, not only will the depression be prolonged, but when we finally climb out of it, we shall have an unnecessarily increased burden of depreciated properties and of broken families who will be a permanent charge on charity.

The best measure of civilization is our ability to provide for the future. It is a long distance from the savage Hottentot, who sleeps contentedly when his belly is full and wakes up to activity only when starvation begins, to the Egyptians who took advantage of seven years of plenty to provide for seven years of famine. It is another long distance from ancient Egypt to modern America where we are planning to reduce the peaks and raise the valleys of business cycles. But the question is whether we are civilized enough to act as well as plan.

The Association rightly says that we have reserves of capital as the Egyptians had reserves of corn, that we have plenty of work to do and men and women whose chief desire is to do that work so they may earn a living. In order to help bring work and workers together the Housing Association urges that

1. Legal housing standards be vigorously enforced.

This means repair and reconditioning of dwellings worth repair and reconditioning. It means demolition of the rest. Both repair and demolition will give employment. Both mean adding to the capital value of Pittsburgh. If this results in undue hardship to some owners their cases should be taken up individually to see if aid can be extended. But the work should be done.

2. Regular public services be maintained on a basis of at least normal efficiency.

This is no time to add to unemployment by discharging public employees.

The Association says:

The burden of Pittsburgh is dirt. Dirt adds to the cost of doing business here. It adds to the cost of living here. It decreases the desire to live here and so costs us desirable citizens. It depresses our standard of living, inclines us to accept sub-normal conditions. Getting clean and keeping clean would be an invigorating experience. And today we not only have the opportunity, but, utilizing the opportunity will help us to solve our most pressing immediate problem, unemployment. Imagine that we had

1. Clean streets and alleys
2. Clean hillsides and vacant lots
3. Clean yards and houses.

The effect would be that of transformation.

A man with a week's growth of beard, a soiled and frayed collar, rumpled clothes, shoes down at heel, not only gives an impression of inefficiency and slackness of character, but usually justifies the impression. In this respect a city is like a man.

Getting clean and keeping clean means both municipal and private activity. One supplements the other; it does little good to clean one's yard or house if every breeze blows dirt and litter in from the street. It does little good to clean streets and other public places if householders and storekeepers dump rubbish on them. The initiative belongs to the public authorities. But back of them should be a supporting public opinion that will not only give strength to their elbows but will overcome the reluctance of citizens who prefer to remain dirty.

SIXTY-SIX MILLION PEOPLE IN COOPERATIVE HOUSING*

Printed in German and published in Moscow this book on cooperative housing in Soviet Russia is intended as propaganda for the Soviet methods. But it does present an interesting and factual account of cooperative housing in that country.

Sixty million men, women and children lived in cooperative houses in Russia in 1929. The Associations are all urban and practically limited to workers. The tenant cooperatives provided for five million while the building cooperatives put up homes for one million.

The class character of these enterprises is frankly admitted. The Soviet Government intends to train workers in cooperative and social living by supplanting many functions of the individual home. And so the Cooperatives are invariably equipped with common dining rooms, meeting rooms, kindergartens, libraries and "red corners".

Members of a Cooperative do not pay for value received but in proportion to their ability to pay. Even interest on loans from the State Bank depends on the average income of the members of a Cooperative Society. Rates are from $\frac{1}{2}$ of 1% to 2%—unusually low for Russia.

The organization of a tenant cooperative seems a comparatively simple matter. Land and the bulk of real estate has been confiscated by revolutionary agencies and is now held either by the national or local governments. Tenants of one or more dwellings simply decide by vote to become cooperative. If sanctioned by the authorities they are held responsible for maintaining the property and services in good order, and a reserve for depreciation.

The building Cooperatives have a harder time because of the national shortage of materials and facilities. Workers may contribute monthly sums toward their initial payment for a number of years without being assured of a new home. Russians expect more rapid progress in the near future as a result of their Five Year Plan intended to industrialize the country.

Although there is much governmental supervision, national planning and considerable standardization, the illustrations in the book indicate considerable variety in architecture. The people in the illustrations are invariably working class and peasant types.

WILLIAM ROSS

Field Secretary, Co-Operative League, New York City

* *Kooperation im System der Wohnungswirtschaft in der Sowjetunion*, by C. Ryss, Centrosoyus, Moscow, 1929. 96 pp.

IL DUCE AND THE TOWN PLANNING OF MODERN ROME

What it means to have a benevolent dictator preside over the destinies of a great country is again strikingly illustrated by the report of the first meeting of the Commission for Revising the Town Planning Scheme for the City of Rome. It was presided over by Signor Mussolini, who on this occasion set forth his characteristic ideas as to the future development of that city.

He pointed out that the members of the Commission should not merely take account of the Rome of to-day, but of the Rome of 1950, and even of the year 2000. In 1950 he anticipated the city would probably have a population of 2,000,000 inhabitants with 150,000 motor vehicles, and that it was essential that the new plans to be developed should be conceived on a grand scale. It is not necessary for Il Duce to have read Burnham's famous injunction "Make no little plans", for it is in his very nature—a part of his very being.

What he said on this subject on this occasion has great interest for American city planners. He pointed out that the city would find its natural lines of growth and beauty in following the directions of the hills and of the sea. The Rome of the future must have parks, gardens and playing spaces; while even the most crowded quarters must be sufficiently supplied with light and air.

Discussing the complaints that have been made by some that the picturesqueness of Rome has been sacrificed to an excessive regard for the remains of the antique Imperial period, Signor Mussolini recalled that Rome is made up of at least 4 different cities; and added that the Commission was faced with the difficult and interesting task of harmonising the peculiar character and purpose of each of these.

To his mind the aim of the Commission must, therefore, be to preserve this architectural scheme rather than "a local color sometimes in the worst taste, anti-hygienic and anti-aesthetic". While preserving the old churches, he went on, they must also preserve "the solemn monuments of the Imperial epoch", inasmuch as they constitute the living witness of "the memorable events of that glorious period". He added that the clearing away of certain small dwelling houses had already restored "the plastic vision of the Seven Hills", which had almost been submerged under the chaotic construction of past centuries.

Il Duce was not alone in coming to the rescue of the present plans by which much of Imperial Rome hitherto hidden is now being uncovered and disclosed to the people of that city. Prince Boncompagni-Ludovisi, the Governor of Rome, also asserted on this occasion that the local color so dear to foreigners when encountered in Italy, was made

up of lurid alleys and of hovels with the linen hanging out of the windows. "The capital of this new and great Italy", said he, "rejects with disdain these remains of a shameful past."

When the re-planning of Rome that its present rulers contemplate is completed, it will be, indeed, not only a vast treasure house of beauties of the antique world, but a spot that every person interested in intelligent city development will find it interesting and profitable to visit.

RENTS INCREASED IN ITALY

After having rents regulated for 13 years in Italy—during which time landlords were forbidden to increase rents beyond a sum fixed by the Government—Italy has passed into a period of freedom from control by law.

A striking example is afforded of how matters function in a country ruled over by a benevolent despot. Recent dispatches from Milan, quote the President of the Fascist Home-Building Federation as having reported to Premier Mussolini that, although upon the advent of this freedom from control landlords have increased rents from 10 to 12%, it had been done without complaint by the tenants and without disturbance of any kind.

ENGLISH RENT LAWS CAUSE MANY TROUBLES

Great dissatisfaction is being constantly expressed from all quarters in England with the continuance of the Rent Control Laws that were enacted in that country during and after the war, and which have been carried on the statute books from year to year and continued long after they should have been allowed to lapse. As we have pointed out in these columns repeatedly with regard to similar statutes that were in force in New York, the difficulty is that no politician is able to deal courageously with this question; for he is always conscious of the fact that there are vast hordes of tenants with votes, that if he takes a position for the repeal of the rent laws he will bring down their hostility upon his head—and as the voters out-number the landlords the rent laws stay on the statute books.

In a recent discussion of this subject in Parliament some months ago the following evils were charged up to these laws:

In many cases they have stopped altogether the winding-up of estates. They hamper building development. They deal with a rateable (taxable) value that in many cases bears no relationship to the rateable value of property to-day. They protect tenants who make a business of sub-letting property that belongs to others. They keep out of their own property the owners of single houses. And, finally, they do nothing to increase the housing accommodations of the country.

Probably the most serious situation resulting from the continuance of these laws upon the statute books lies in the difficulty of dealing with insanitary property. What is perhaps the greatest obstacle to owners putting their property in proper condition is the fact that an owner cannot obtain control of his house even for that purpose.

The *Architects' Journal* commenting editorially on this situation said recently:

The protection of tenants under the Act virtually ceases in the event of the sanitary authority condemning a house as unfit for human habitation; unless its insanitary faults are rectified, an eviction order can be enforced. But before that sad condition is reached, a state of things may arise equally threatening to the inhabitants: the house may become a dangerous structure according to the local surveyor, and a notice to that effect may be issued. Then the fun begins.

The owner has to repair, and almost certainly has to rebuild, one, at least, of the walls. It is expensive work, necessitating in some cases professional advice and in every case the employment of a builder who is used to such dubious operations. A lump sum price cannot be obtained. The work goes on from day to day very slowly, with the costs mounting rapidly and out of all proportion to pace. Money which the owner had saved for rebuilding in due course is swallowed without increasing the amenities of the house, or to any great extent the value of the property. The presence of the tenant in the house swells the cost of the repairs.

The owner is justifiably annoyed, for if there were no Act he would have given his tenant notice, pulled down the house, and rebuilt with up-to-date conveniences, using the old materials as far as possible. It is not fair to say that the dangerous state of the house is due to the owner's former neglect; it is more probably due to the passing of heavy traffic, or the effect of a long drought on clay soil.

Is there not a case here for an exception to be made to the operation of the Act? The owner thinks so, and considers that he should be allowed to submit a scheme for rebuilding to the local authority, and, on its approval, the tenant should be liable to quit.

Let us now look at the matter from the tenant's point of view. He has a house which, however picturesque with age, has been noted as a dangerous structure. The tenant wishes to leave, before his house-front falls into the street, a happening promised when the next steam lorry passes, probably at dead of night. Also, his wife is disturbed in mind at the thought of the discomfort, the dust, the rain and the draughts which will accompany the almost endless work of reconstruction. She supposes the children will choose that time for measles or influenza (and they are sure to). But the tenant can find nowhere else to go. The Council houses are "booked up," the family is too large for lodgings, and all the other sitting tenants are sitting tight. So the tenant,

though his interest is quite compatible with the landlord's, has to stay and go through with the dust and measles.

Obviously the matter has to be taken a step farther, to the third party involved, who is the local authority. Landlord and tenant must combine and demand of their Council—the landlord that he be allowed temporarily to shore up the dangerous structure; the tenant that he be provided with another dwelling as early as possible and at a rent which he can afford to pay.

From all of which it is evident that these interferences with natural economic forces and the law of supply and demand only prove mischievous and should never be resorted to.

A GOVERNMENT INQUIRY INTO ENGLAND'S RENT LAWS

In view of the dissatisfaction that is evidenced in many quarters with the workings of the Rent Restrictions Act, the Government has finally yielded to representations made to it and has announced its intention of appointing a Committee of Inquiry to look into the whole working of the Rent Restriction Law.

In making this announcement, the Government calls attention to the fact that no examination of the subject has been made for 7 years, that the whole situation has been very much modified by such factors as the operation of the Housing Act of 1923, as well as by the Housing Act of this year, and the great addition made to the number of houses available.

It believes that the only way to handle the subject is to have a careful general inquiry made into the whole matter. It is fully conscious of the difficulties and hardships resulting from the existing Acts, but feels that before coming to any conclusions as to the course to be adopted, the whole field should be fully examined by a strong Departmental Committee, which they propose to set up as soon as possible. Such Committee has recently been appointed and is now taking up the whole question.

HOW RENT LAWS WORK IN FRANCE

A striking instance of the injustices that arise under the laws controlling rents in France is found in recent dispatches from Paris that call attention to a case decided by the French Rent Courts a few months ago where the landlord, an American—one who incidentally served as a volunteer in the French Army before the United States entered the

war and whose brother was killed while a pilot in the Lafayette Escadrille—sought to eject the tenant from a dwelling owned by him.

The court, however, refused to permit this, holding that the tenant's lease was valid and that he could continue to occupy the house until the year 1936, although under the French Rent Laws he pays but 7500 francs or \$300 a year rent which, it is stated, is less than the amount of taxes alone that the owner of the house is required to pay to the French Government.

Further comment seems superfluous.

INDUSTRY MOVING TO WELWYN GARDEN CITY

A recent report of the Welwyn Garden City Association deals with the movement of labor and industry to that community. It appears that of 800 working-class households the subject of inquiry it was found that 1/6 of the wage-earners worked in London. These comprised, for the most part, clerks and railway men who had special facilities for cheap traveling. Of the labor in Welwyn Garden City, the majority of the clerks came from London; while in the case of unskilled workers most were from the surrounding towns and villages. Skilled workers are drawn from Welwyn Garden City in the proportion of 50%. The rest are from London and the United Kingdom. Building operations at Welwyn employ 40%, while metal workers and clerks make up the bulk of the rest. In only 20% of the families is there more than one wage-earner. It is stated that wages are proportionately higher at Welwyn than in other towns, owing to the modern labor policy of Welwyn's employers, the average wage being approximately 63 shillings per week.

Among the reasons that are given by various workers for moving to Welwyn are a desire to live near the workshop; an urgent need for housing accommodations; a desire to avoid overcrowding; and, in a small number of cases, a general desire for country surroundings and natural beauty. A considerable part of the population consists of newly-married couples, who evidently desire to make their start in life in the delightful surroundings that they will find at Welwyn.

From which it appears that Welwyn is rapidly becoming what its projectors have always contemplated, a true Garden City—viz., a self-contained community with industry in sufficient quantity to sustain its population.

MAKING HOME BUILDING PAINLESS

In these days when many housewives are too lazy to cut bread and butter—the wide commercial acceptance of “ready-cut” bread implies no other conclusion—it is not surprising that realtors and builders should be casting around for some method that would make the purchase of a home—to say nothing of its building—as nearly painless as possible.

Some of them seem to think that when the selection of a home is made as easy as the selection of a new radio or automobile, that home building and land subdivision will come into its own once more. We do not feel so sure of this. At any rate, it is not without interest that various methods are being adopted in different parts of the country as they put it, “to take the bother out of home building.”

One of these is the effort of a building construction company in Baltimore, which by its so-called “Visualization Plan” seeks to minimize the troubles that are usually associated with the building of a home. This plan which seems to have given satisfaction thus far to the company’s clients consists of combining the functions of architect, builder and real estate advisor in one entity.

To its promoters the fact that buildings always cost so much more than the architects originally estimate, is one of the chief factors why people hesitate to embark on home building. The average family has only so much money that it can afford to put into a home and when it finds that it is called upon to pay half as much again as it had expected, it naturally becomes discouraged; and other families who may have thought of putting their savings into a home draw back from it with fear.

To overcome this difficulty this building company assumes full responsibility for the whole project from the beginning. It aids in the selection of a site, if the owner already has not one of his own, and renders services which ends only when the keys to a finished house are placed in the client’s hands. Their architects consult with the client, secure from him an accurate idea of the type of house he desires, the style and period of architecture that he prefers, the number and size of the rooms he considers necessary, &c.

From these suggestions of the client the company through its architects then prepares plans and submits them for their client’s approval. Such changes as the client desires are made and such modifications of details as are wished are incorporated in the final plans. When the plans have once been approved by the client, all further consideration and responsibility can be dismissed, so far as the client is concerned. There will be no extras.

Under this scheme the company agrees to build the home decided upon for the price mentioned. No matter how much more it may actually cost, the client is not called upon to pay one penny more than the sum agreed upon. This is a very important consideration. Of course, what happens is, that where the company has made a wrong estimate or its architect has erred and there is a loss, the company stands the loss and not the client.

Naturally, economies in construction are effected through large scale buying of such an organization, as all the materials that go into these homes are purchased in quantities and the benefit of this is passed on to the client.

Persons interested in this new development in home building can obtain further details from the Peyton B. Strobel Construction Company, 206 East Lexington Street, Baltimore, Md.

LAND TENURE IN SCOTLAND

Americans motoring in Scotland have often been intrigued with signs on vacant land reading, "Lands to Feu"; and we are sure have often asked themselves what it meant, imagining that it meant land to rent but wondering at that strange word "Feu", and conjecturing whether it was not the same word as the word so commonly used in our real estate and legal practice—"fee simple".

People who have had these questions unsolved, will, we feel sure, be interested in a description of the Scottish system of land tenure given before the British Town Planning Institute recently by James Macaulay, of Scotland, in an address on Town Planning Economics. Mr. Macaulay describes the Scottish system of land tenure as follows:

The Scottish system of land tenure differs from that of England. In Scotland there are two tenures, viz., First, *Allodial*; and Second, *Feudal*.

In the case of the *Allodial* lands the land is held under unqualified ownership without any conditions of payment, return in kind, service or other consideration. Such lands and superiorities are those belonging to the Crown, the Prince of Scotland, turnpike roads, udal lands in Orkney and Shetland, and ground acquired compulsorily by railway companies or other bodies under the Lands Clauses and other Acts.

The *Feudal* tenure under which the bulk of the land of the country is held lays down that no person is absolute owner of land so held, but is subject, either mediately or immediately, to the Crown. There are some 5 sub-divisions of Feudal tenure, viz.,

- (1) *Blench* for which an elusory return such as a penny yearly or a rose in June has to be made when asked for.
- (2) *Burgage* still to be found in Royal Burghs for which the return is watching and warding the Town, i. e. policing.
- (3) *Booking* which is practically the same as the last and limited to the Burgh of Paisley.

- (4) *Mortmain* by which the Church owned Lands prior to the Reformation and the return was prayers and tears for the souls of the departed and
- (5) *Feufarm* usually called Feu (simply) for which the return is in money and is the commonest holding to-day.

In fact the other types are practically immersed in this one. The deed governing the holding and conveyance of Land under this second tenure known as Feu is called a Feu Charter; which as its name suggests is a contract between the Superior retaining an Estate of Superiority and a Vassal obtaining a Grant of Property under an annual return to be made by the Vassal to the Superior which, as already shown, may take various forms.

While "Feu" is the usual form of Land Tenure granted by Superiors, in some parts of Scotland, owners of estates, instead of granting Feus of ground for the erection of buildings, grant leases—sometimes called Long Leases and at other times Building Leases—the periods being 999 or 99 years respectively; these Leases are freely assignable and on their termination the ground and building revert to the owner.

As a rule, the owner of a property can do with it as he likes and any stipulation to the contrary which the title may contain is of no effect. There is, however, one exception to this general rule in the case of entails in which case the lands are destined to certain specified series of persons, each person as he succeeds is the owner of the lands subject to the following limitations, viz.,

- (1) He has no power to alter the order of erection set out in the entail.
- (2) He cannot sell any portion of the entailed lands.
- (3) He cannot burden the entailed lands with debt.

The effective curtailment of the feudal system in England under the Law of Property (Consolidation) Act 1925, is conveyed in the first clause which reads: The only estates in land which are capable of subsisting or of being conveyed or created at law are .

- (a) An estate in fee simple absolute in possession:
- (b) A term of years absolute.

To enumerate all the subsidy influences upon land ownership such as servitudes, feuing restrictions, rights-of-way, nuisances, and the like is quite beyond the scope of this Paper; and my purpose is served if I have made clear that there is a very striking difference between land ownership in Scotland and that of England, and definitely shown the need for special consideration which is also clearly demonstrated by the provisions made in the various Town Planning Acts in their application to Scotland.

GEORGE B. FORD

The cause of city planning has lost a leader and the cause of housing a devoted friend in the untimely death of George B. Ford, architect and city planner, who died a few months ago after an operation.

While Mr. Ford was by profession an architect, housing and city planning engrossed his attention and became his chief interest. Ap-

pointed as the executive officer of the Commission on the Height of Buildings of New York City in 1913—whose labors resulted in the enactment of the first comprehensive Zoning Ordinance in this country—he devoted himself thenceforth to zoning and city planning. With an enthusiasm that was indefatigable and that knew no discouragement he labored day after day and night after night, preaching the doctrine of intelligent city growth.

At the time of his death Mr. Ford had relinquished his professional practice as an individual city planner and had accepted the arduous task of technical director of the New York Regional Plan Association under the leadership of George McAneny—an organization formed to carry on the work begun by the Committee on Plan of New York and its Environs.

This is not the occasion in which to discuss Mr. Ford's personality or his sterling qualities, except to say that he approached every problem with an enthusiasm and eagerness that was extraordinary in view of his having reached middle life. Nor is this the place to speak of the services he rendered France after the close of the War when he was selected by the French people from among all other city planners in their country to undertake the replanning of Rheims.

The cause of city planning could ill afford to lose so devoted and able a leader as George Ford.

RACE ISSUES AND ZONING

The attempt to use zoning powers to bring about race segregation—particularly the separation of Negroes from whites in Southern cities—is constantly bobbing up, notwithstanding the definitive decision of the United States Supreme Court as to the invalidity of any such attempt in *Buchanan v. Warly*, 245 U. S. 60.

One of the most ingenious of these attempts—almost childlike in its ingenuousness—occurred recently in the city of Richmond, Virginia. Some months ago a zoning ordinance was enacted in that city, which prohibited persons from using as a residence any building on any street located between intersecting streets where the majority of the residences on such street are occupied by those with whom a person is forbidden to intermarry.

In this case, *City of Richmond et al. v. Deans*, 37 Fed. 2nd 712, the Negroes affected promptly tested out this new ordinance in the courts.

The trial court held the ordinance invalid as violating the principles laid down by the United States Supreme Court, and from this decision an appeal was taken by the property owners interested to the Circuit Court of Appeals for that district. That court, in a decision handed down some months ago, made short work of this manifest attempt to evade the principles of the Supreme Court's decision, pointing out that any attempt to accomplish Negro segregation by law was void and that the decisions of the United States Supreme Court in *Buchanan v. Warly* and *Harmon v. Tyler* were controlling and that this ingenious attempt was nothing but a subterfuge.

The white property owners died hard, however, for the case was carried to the United States Supreme Court which simply affirmed its previous decisions. Notwithstanding this, however, the Richmond property owners urged upon that court a re-hearing of the case, which was promptly denied.

MAKING IT A CRIME TO VIOLATE A PRIVATE CONTRACT

Even more ingenious was the similar attempt—made in Dallas, Texas some months earlier—where some bright mind hit upon the device of enacting an ordinance that made it a crime to violate a private contract or agreement made by parties to observe race segregation in regard to the sale, lease and occupancy of land in that city.

It appears that in 1927, an act was passed at the regular session of the Texas legislature, authorizing the city to provide by suitable ordinances for the segregation of Negroes and whites, to withhold permits for the construction of houses to be occupied by Negroes in white communities, and, similarly, with regard to houses for occupancy by whites in Negro communities, with authority to define white and Negro races and white and Negro communities, and to enforce by appropriate penalties the observance of the ordinance.

Acting under this power the city of Dallas adopted such an ordinance providing that where parties to a segregation agreement, members of the white and colored races, had agreed and mutually bound themselves to observe covenants segregating the races in regard to the sale, lease and occupancy of lands belonging to them, as they were legally authorized to do, the city, in the interest of public peace and the general welfare, had authority to provide that a failure to observe the terms of this covenant should constitute a misdemeanor and should be punished as such.

The case was tried originally and a re-hearing requested before the court of Civil Appeals of Texas, *City of Dallas et al v. Liberty Annex Corporation* 19 S. W. 2nd, 845.

The appellate court ruling on this question, after pointing out that the ordinance in question had been adopted by the people after an election when this question was before them, went on to state that when the case was first before the court on appeal it held the ordinance unconstitutional and void on the authority of the United States Supreme Court decision in *Buchanan v. Warly*. In the re-hearing of the case the court re-affirmed that holding.

On the question of the new device for accomplishing by indirection what the courts had forbidden cities to accomplish directly, the appellate court quotes what was said when the case was first held before it, 289 S. W. 1067.

Was it within the power of the city of Dallas to penalize a breach of the segregation agreement? We think not. Great latitude is allowed legislative bodies in exercising the police power to safeguard the health, safety, and comfort of the public; fraud and deceit, in relation to contracts, may be punished criminally, and various businesses, impressed with a public use, may be regulated; but we have been cited to no authority sustaining a statute or ordinance punishing criminally the breach of a contract such as the one under review. If the breach of the segregation agreement under consideration may be punished criminally, no reason exists why the entire field of civil contracts may not be occupied by this class of legislation, and a penalty imposed for the breach of contracts of every nature.

CONJURING IN THE NAME OF THE POLICE POWER

The court concluded that

It was beyond the province of the city of Dallas, by simply conjuring in the name of the police power, to brand as a crime an act, recognized as a right, privilege, and property itself. The act of the legislature brought to our attention added nothing and gave no vitality to the segregation ordinances, for the simple reason that the legislature was as impotent as the city to enact a valid law on the subject.

We therefore hold the segregation ordinances in conflict with the "due process of law" provision of both our state and federal constitutions, hence void and unenforceible.

A LEGAL WAY OF RACE SEGREGATION

Although the segregation of races may not be accomplished by zoning or the use of the police power, there is a method that can be employed that should prove effective and meet the needs and desires of those sections of the country where there is a predominant colored

population and where race segregation seems to the people in that community desirable.

The method was strongly hinted at by the United States Supreme Court in the leading case of *Harmon v. Tyler*, although the court did not definitely pass upon the legality of the method there employed—simply because there was no issue before them requiring a decision.

The method that was under consideration in that case was an agreement by private covenant running with the land by which owners of property in a given section of a community, bound themselves never to sell it so that it could be occupied by members of the colored race.

Since the handing down of that decision by the country's highest court, intelligent realtors and property owners throughout the country have been availing themselves of the method therein suggested, and have been entering into such private covenants.

That such agreements are likely to be sustained by the courts of the country, is evidenced by a decision handed down by California's highest court, the Supreme Court of that State, about two years ago, in the case of *Wayt v. Patee*, 269 Pac. 660. In that case the covenant restricted the property against sales to a person not of the Caucasian race and also prevented occupancy by such persons.

The court held that the prohibition against sale was invalid, but sustained the prohibition against occupancy.

Discussing this difference the court says

It has been the settled law of this state that there is a material difference between a condition in a deed or other instrument whereby the owner of real property binds himself not to transfer or convey said real property to a certain class of individuals, and a condition whereby the owner binds himself not to permit said real property to be occupied by the same class of individuals. The first condition is held to be in restraint of alienation, and thereby void under the terms of section 711 of the Civil Code. But a condition in a deed or other instrument against the *occupancy* of real property by persons of a certain class, as, for instance, those not of the Caucasian race, is valid and binding.

It is thus seen that a way is open to property owners who so desire it to protect property in a given neighborhood against occupancy by persons of a race whom it is not desired to have live in that community. There is one important element, however, in this method which should not be overlooked—and that is, that the restrictions must run with the land.

“RETAIL DISTRICTS” SUSTAINED

New York City was a pioneer a little over a year ago in establishing a new type of zoning district confined to so-called retail trade—practically a merchandising district.

What attitude the courts would take with regard to this refinement of the application of zoning principles to different parts of a great city has naturally been in some doubt. That doubt has recently been resolved by a decision of the Appellate Division of the First Department in N. Y., sustaining without opinion the decision of the trial court in holding that it was within the power of the local authorities to establish such retail districts, and that the provisions of law that govern its establishment had been duly observed.

The case arose with respect to property of a very high value in the Murray Hill section on the block front on the West side of Madison Avenue between 36th and 37th Streets—a district which has been subject for many years to various property restrictions, which have probably brought about more litigation than any other set of restrictions in the United States and have occupied the attention of the courts for many years. One of the claims made by the property owners who wished to prevent the establishment of a retail district in this locality was that the local authorities of New York had not proceeded in accordance with the law and that what they had done constituted merely an alteration of an existing district. If this contention has been sustained, then the action taken by the local authorities would have been contrary to law, for the New York law provides that before an existing district can be altered, there must be the consent of the owners of 20% of the frontage directly opposite, failing which the action taken must receive the unanimous affirmative vote of the local authorities.

Discussing this claim, Justice Sherman of the Supreme Court had the following to say:

If the situation were that this property had, upon petition, been transferred from one existing Use district to another, this contention might not be without force. Such, however, is not the case. This was no mere alteration, supplement or change within the scope of section 24. The Board of Estimate and Apportionment had for upwards of 5 years been concerned with the creation of an entirely new district in order adequately to meet changing conditions in the midtown section of Manhattan. During all that time the Board was not heeding merely the individual preference of a particular block owner, but rather the wider purpose of devising and erecting for the general good a new district which, as an entirety, would answer the need which it was felt existed for setting apart in the midtown section an entirely new Use district.

A reading of section 242-b of the Greater New York Charter, as amended by Laws 1924, c. 295 and section 24 of the New York Building Zone Resolution, makes it impossible to believe that it was intended that 20% of the ownership of a small fraction of the Use district so being created should be able to thwart the adoption of the district as an entirety by securing the obstructing voice of a single dissenting vote in the Board. Effective opposition could be made only by the owners of 20% of the entire frontage—the perimeter of the area of the new district. The opposition manifested was clearly inadequate to require a unanimous vote in support of the resolution.

Whether the decision of the Appellate Division is to be appealed and a further decision had by New York's court of last resort has not been disclosed.

PROTECTING THE CITY PLAN BY "ELASTIC STREETS"

One of the moot questions in city planning and still seeking solution in its practical application is the question of how to protect the city plan so that streets which may be laid out on the city map for ultimate development may in the interim be kept free from buildings.

As our readers will recall, there are two leading schools of thought in the city planning profession as to possible methods of achieving this result. These are designated as the New York and the Massachusetts methods respectively. A third method, a modification of the Massachusetts or Nichols method is presented in the Standard City Planning Enabling Act of the Department of Commerce.

Recently a very interesting case arose in Wisconsin where an attempt was made in the city of West Allis, near Milwaukee, to prevent a property owner from building on the front portion of his land on the ground that the city ultimately intended to take a strip 20 feet in width on this particular street for ultimate street-widening. This is what is known in city planning as the creation of an "elastic street".

The property owner not relishing the idea of being prevented from using his property without compensation therefor, went to law about it, with the result that the Circuit Court of Wisconsin handed down a decision a few months ago, *State ex rel. Max Wittenberg*, holding that it was not within the power of municipalities in that state to proceed by any such method, and that the only way in which property could be taken was through the power of eminent domain and the payment of compensation therefor.

Among the arguments advanced by counsel for the city was the claim that "from the practical standpoint this is the only feasible way

to accomplish street widening at a cost which the city can afford to pay.”

In stating the dominant issue before the court the City Attorney expressed it as follows

Can a city where it has already widened part of a street establish a setback line of 20 feet on one side of the street between two points for the purpose of acquiring that area in the future, without presently compensating the property owners for all land located between the said line and the present street line.

Discussing this question the court very properly points out the difference between an ordinary building-line setback and the proposal made here, which is quite evidently a proposal for a so-called “elastic street”, though that term is not used by the court. The court thus differentiates the two, quoting from the leading case in the federal courts, *Gorieb vs. Fox*, 274 U. S. 603, as follows:

A setback, in its ordinarily accepted meaning, is not a widening of the street. It does not involve a setting back of the curb lines. The basis of an ordinance providing for a setback is to provide front yards to afford room for lawns and trees; keep the dwellings farther from the dust, noise and fumes of the street; add to the attractiveness and comfort of a residential district, and other purposes conducive to the general welfare.

On the question involved in the fact that the property while not being taken immediately for public use was ultimately to be so taken, the court very properly says:

The taking of property for a future public use is as compensatable as the taking of it for a present public use.

After reviewing leading decisions bearing on the question at issue, the court rightly concludes that the method proposed here is illegal and void. We are informed that following this decision, the local authorities have started condemnation proceedings for the immediate taking of the property desired.

In considering this decision, it should be clearly differentiated from the method proposed in the Standard City Planning Enabling Act of the Department of Commerce. That Act clearly recognizes the point of view expressed in this decision of the Wisconsin courts, and provides for compensation to owners who are deprived of the use of their property for a period while the local authorities are waiting to determine what use they will ultimately make of the street, with full compensation later when the property is actually taken.

INTERNATIONAL CONGRESS AND EXHIBITION AT BERLIN

JUNE 1-5, 1931

A rather unusual opportunity awaits those interested in Housing and City Planning in the chance to attend two great international Housing and Town Planning meetings that are to be held simultaneously at Berlin from June 1st to June 5th, 1931.

The 13th International Housing and Town Planning Congress will be held by the International Federation for Housing and Town Planning under the auspices of the Magistrat of the City of Berlin and the Reich and Prussian Governments.

The meetings of the Congress will be held in the mornings in the Festsaalgebäude adjoining the Zoological Gardens—situated in the West End of Berlin where there are good hotels. The meeting halls are also easily reached by the Stadtbahn, the underground railway and many trolley and omnibus routes. The building contains a number of suitable halls and rooms and there will be ample opportunity for social intercourse among the delegates to have meetings in small groups, supplementing the larger meetings. Special arrangements have been made for luncheon to be served in the same building as the Congress meetings. Visits to places of interest and study tours will take place as a rule in the afternoon and will start from the Festsaalgebäude.

On the conclusion of the Berlin meetings, it is planned to organize a Housing tour to see other German towns for those who so desire.

The Congress promises to be unusually profitable, as those responsible for it have wisely limited the subjects to be discussed to two main subjects, one in the town planning field, the other in the housing field. In the latter, the main topic of discussion will be "The Abolition of Slums"; in the former it will be "The Traffic Problem in Relation to Town and Regional Planning". Papers on these two subjects will be contributed by leaders in these fields in the respective countries. Following the usual custom the Congress Papers and Reports will be sent to delegates in print well in advance of the Congress meeting. The Papers will not be read at the Congress, but a general Report on the Papers presented will serve as a basis for discussion on that occasion.

At the same time, the International Housing Association—of which Dr. Hans Kampffmeyer is the executive officer, with offices at Frankfurt—will hold its Congress.

The chief topics to be discussed at these meetings are the following:

1. Is it possible under present conditions for private enterprise, which is dependent on profits to supply without government aid the needs of the great mass of the people for small dwellings in such a manner as to conform with economic, social, hygienic and cultural demands?

2. How is building enterprise to be organised so as to supply the need of small dwellings?
3. The management of public utility buildings (limited-dividend enterprises).

In addition to these main topics there will be special meetings of other groups to discuss such questions as, "Management and Supervision of Dwellings", "The Building of Small Dwellings at Low Rents", and "How Women Can Help Solve the Housing Problem".

A study tour in connection with the Congress will be arranged to give an opportunity to the delegates of becoming acquainted with housing and town planning work in some of the German towns.

A GREAT INTERNATIONAL EXHIBITION

At the same time that these discussions are being had, there will be shown in connection with the meetings, in a special building devoted to the purpose, a great International Housing and Town Planning Exhibition, which will be an important feature of the occasion. Exhibits from all of the leading countries of the world in the respective fields of Housing and Town Planning will be contributed, and it is expected that the latest developments in these fields will be shown and the delegates afforded an opportunity of learning what is happening in the leading countries of Europe.

This exhibition will be a part of a great German Building Exhibition, which will start some months earlier and which will show the development of building materials and processes in all aspects as they have been worked out in Germany in recent years. This larger exhibition is a commercial one and a local one, as no foreign exhibits will be displayed.

There is every probability that interesting study tours, both before and after the Berlin meetings, will be arranged for, with opportunities to see the most recent housing developments in England, Holland, Germany and Italy.

Arrangements for the United States' participation in both the Congress and the Exhibit are in the hands, respectively, of Flavel Shurtleff, Secretary of the National City Planning Conference, 130 East 22nd Street, with regard to City Planning matters, and Lawrence Veiller, Secretary of the National Housing Association, 105 East 22nd Street, New York City, with regard to Housing matters. Persons desiring further information should communicate with them.

No person interested in either Housing or Town Planning in the United States, who can afford the time or the expense of making this trip to Germany next June should fail to do so. It is an opportunity not to be missed.